the weekly Standard

JULY 15, 2002

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THE POLITICS OF GOD

JEFFREY BELL • PETER BERKOWITZ

Allah Mode

France's Islam Problem

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

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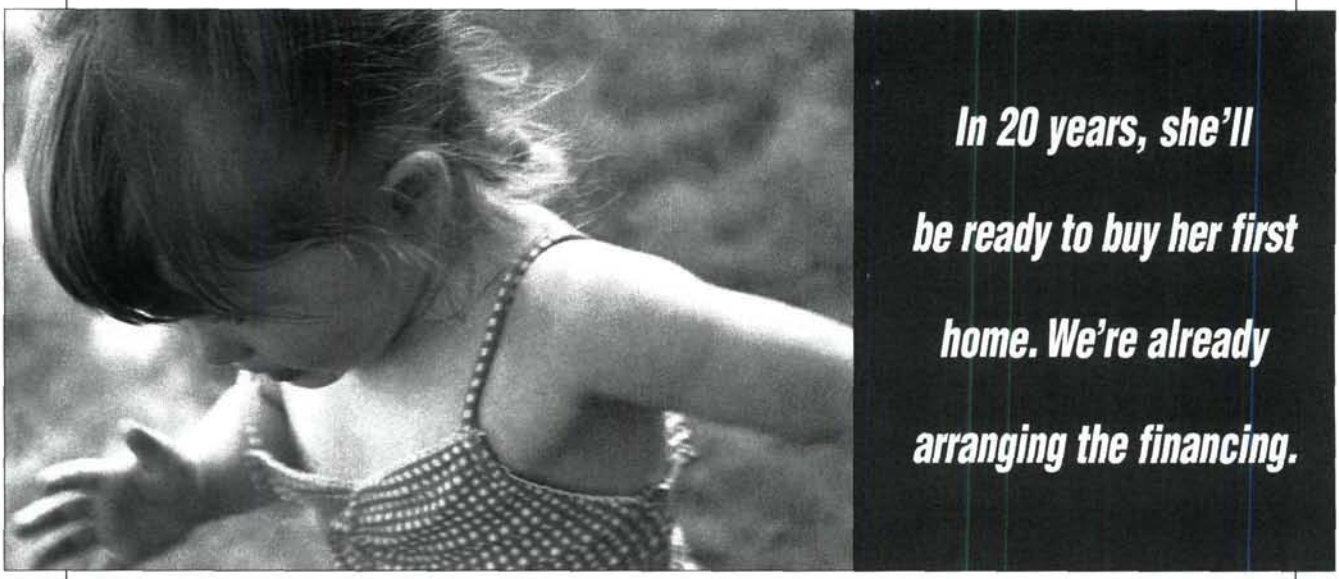

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Secrets of the Secret Service

Capitol Hill lawmakers considering the president's plan for a cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security will want to look awfully hard at one particular flow-chart revision it contemplates—the new outfit's absorption of the Secret Service—in light of an eye-opening report in the June 17 issue of *U.S. News and World Report*. The story has so far inspired a handful of not-very-funny late-night television jokes. But for some reason it has otherwise largely escaped notice. Which is worse than a pity, because if reporter Chitra Ragavan and her colleagues are to be believed—and why shouldn't they be?—the federal agency charged with protecting our president's life is on the verge of abject functional and moral collapse.

U.S. News reports that a drug-abusing street criminal wound up dead in one Secret Service agent's apartment after an evening of sex. That agents have recently been convicted of embezzlement and welfare fraud. That a few months ago, four agents on Vice President Cheney's personal detail got into a drunken brawl with a large group of San Diego bar patrons—during which one agent bit off the tip of a local's ear. That in mid-February, another group of agents on Cheney's detail left the agents' printed plan for the vice president's trip to the Winter Olympics on a Salt Lake City store counter—and then abused the shopkeeper who conscientiously returned it to them.

Wait, we're just getting started. *U.S. News* reports that a Secret Service agent guarding former President Reagan has been convicted of statutory rape—involving a 16-year-old girl—and violently resisting arrest while in possession of methamphetamine. The magazine suggests that the Service has a notable alcoholism problem. That agents on the White House Counter Assault Team watch pornographic movies in the basement of the Executive Mansion. That Secret Service field offices have more than once been visited by professional strippers. And that morale problems—and resulting early retirements and resignations—have become so severe that the agency is having trouble staffing the sniper teams that patrol the White House roof.

There's even—predictably, THE SCRAPBOOK supposes—a Clinton angle. According to Ragavan & Co., it seems there is widespread suspicion among Secret Service line agents that their agency's notorious assertion of "protective function privilege" during Ken Starr's Lewinsky investigation was not designed to protect President Clinton from embarrassing sexual disclosures. No, the thinking goes, then-Secret Service chief Lew Merletti tried to block his employees from talking to the grand jury because he was afraid his own extramarital affair with a White House staffer might be revealed. *U.S. News* says that Merletti's successor, current Secret Service director Brian Stafford, is also "widely believed" to have had an adulterous fling with a Clinton staffer. And that yet another agent, A.T. Smith, was sleeping with yet another White House aide while he was in charge of Hillary Clinton's personal detail.

And so forth. This is the kind of thing we're going to build our Department of Homeland Security around? Not exactly confidence-inspiring. ♦

Quacks Like a Terrorist

All day on July 4 and well into the next day, FBI and local officials insisted the shooting in front of the El Al counter at Los Angeles Airport wasn't terrorism, that it was the act of a lone assailant. The media picked up and promoted both points. How did law enforcement officials and the press know this? They didn't. Either they were being politically correct to an egregious extent or they were just plain winging it. Either way, they were wrong and should have known better.

Consider what law enforcement officials found when they rushed the airport. A man with Middle Eastern looks had gotten in the line at El Al, the Israeli airline, and killed two people before being shot to death himself. He was armed with two guns, a knife, and plenty of bullets. So what did investigators quickly conclude? The *Washington Post* said they "were checking reports from witnesses that the gunman may have been a disgruntled former employee of the airline or the airport, or may have had a dispute over identification in the ticket line."

Huh? These would have been plausible, though only barely, if the shooting had occurred at the United or Continental counter. But at El Al on Independence Day? Please. It was obviously a terrorist act and officials should have recognized it even before the disclosure that the assailant was an Egyptian immigrant who was angry over America's response to September 11. He killed innocent people for political reasons: That's terrorism.

So what made the FBI and other officials think he acted alone? Nothing, except the terrorist didn't have an obvious accomplice at the airport. That hardly meant he acted alone. Palestinian suicide bombers in Israel carry out their deeds alone, but they are backed by dozens who arm, train, and dispatch them. For all the FBI knew on the day of the shooting, the LAX terrorist

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might have been working with Hamas, the Al-Aksa Brigade, or al Qaeda.

What we're facing here is not simply a refusal to face facts but also a ludicrous desire to avoid anything that resembles "ethnic profiling," even when a terrorist act has been carried out. Has the FBI really gotten serious about the war on terrorism? ♦

Faith-based Daschle?

Between now and the August recess, the Democratic party will have to come clean on its stance toward religion in the public square. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle will decide either to support the president's faith-based initiative, as embodied in the CARE Act, or to scuttle it.

The CARE Act provides tax relief to charities, both secular and religious, and is designed to level the playing field for faith-based organizations that apply for federal grants. It was coauthored by Senator Joseph Lieberman and counts Hillary Clinton among its cosponsors. It recently was passed by the Senate Finance Committee.

Daschle seems to like the bill. He wrote in an op-ed that "the CARE Act isn't a Republican or Democratic plan; it is a bipartisan proposal that strikes the right balance between harnessing the best forces of faith in our public life without infringing on the first amendment. . . . I look forward to working with President Bush to get this proposal signed into law."

Yet when the president last week urged an immediate vote on the CARE Act, he received a cold response from Daschle's office. The *New York Times* reported that "the Majority Leader is in no hurry to bring the bill to a vote, despite the President's call for the Senate to act quickly. 'Last I checked he wasn't the Majority Leader of the Senate,' Ranit Schmeltzer, a spokeswoman for Mr. Daschle, said of Mr. Bush."

Schmeltzer is right about one thing: Her boss controls the Senate schedule. It will be interesting to see if he now decides to use that power to put the Democratic party on record in favor of, or against, the faith-based initiative. ♦

An Internship to Leave Off Your Résumé

As if interns hadn't gotten enough bad press in recent years, along comes the Center for Constitutional Rights to make things worse. CCR, a non-profit legal group committed to the "creative use of law as a positive force for social change," has now established the Isabel and Alger Hiss Internship Program, honoring the man who famously made creative use of spying for social change.

The internship is being funded by the estate of Isabel Johnson Hiss, Alger's second wife. The new Hiss interns will assist CCR attorneys "working on government misconduct cases," since, as the Center's press release informs us, Alger Hiss, Stalin's man in Washington, was the victim of "one of the more infamous cases of governmental misconduct in the 20th century." ♦

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Casual

Mark My Words

Who, I found myself wondering the other afternoon in the checkout line at Borders, ever actually pays money for one of those bookmarks full of coo-inducing saucer-eyed kittens or saccharine poetry?

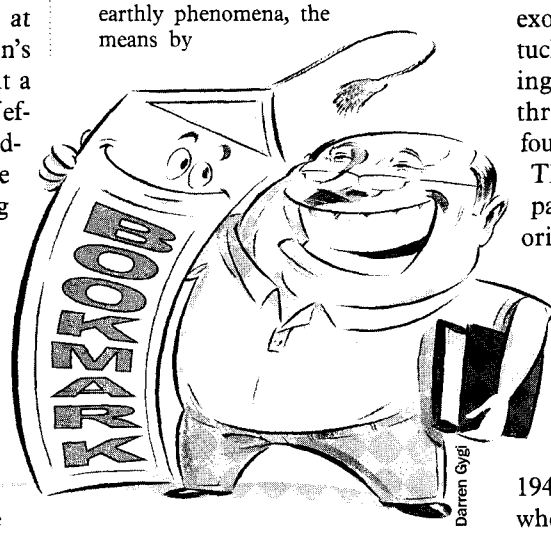
Someone must, but for my part I'm rarely tempted. In my experience, fancy store-bought bookmarks almost always go unused. Last summer at Monticello, inspired by Jefferson's immense personal library, I bought a slick bookmark with a laminated Jefferson 29-cent stamp and a little gold-plated book dangling on a rich blue tassel. I think I last saw it collecting dust on my dining table.

The free, utilitarian bookmarks found beside bookstore cash registers, of course, are another matter. They tend to reflect the character of the bookstore itself. Borders offers nice ones—sturdy, well-sized, with attractive Art Deco designs. But some stores get a little too ambitious, like Kramerbooks, a books-and-coffee joint here in Washington. Its bookmarks offer inane "staff favorites" commentaries, updated regularly. "Kevin," for example, recommends *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*:

> This is a true memoir, if only because it was written expressly to be published and read AFTER the author's death. Frank McCourt, Kathryn Harrison, and Dave Eggers should remember this is the culmination, not the beginning, of a literary career. [*Meow*, Kevin!]

The stores in my college town, Ann Arbor, also displayed their unique *esprit* in their giveaway bookmarks. The pure textbook-and-sweatshirt peddlers featured bookmarks with school spirit—the football team's schedule was printed on them in the Michigan colors, maize and blue. But Shaman Drum—a smug, leftist college-town bookstore whose "salespersyns" viewed razors, combs, and deodorant as oppressive tools of The Man—aimed a bit higher. Here's the twaddle on the reverse of a Shaman Drum bookmark:

> The design on the front . . . ornaments the skin of a Minusinsk Tatar shaman's drum. The figures on the drumhead symbolize spiritual and earthly phenomena, the means by which the shaman is able to establish contact with the gods. Drums are used almost universally in shamanic rituals to signal a transition from one state of consciousness to another. We believe a good bookshop is another way of facilitating a change of consciousness. . . .



Hmm. I believe a good bookshop is a place where I can buy good books at reasonable rates. Shaman Drum did not meet this simple requirement, since its high-altitude spiritual pretensions were matched by its lofty prices. So I bought my *Nicomachean Ethics* at the evil, soulless Borders down the street.

For the true bibliophile, the choice of a bookmark is almost as important as the choice of the book itself. You don't embark upon *The Brothers Karamazov* or *Middlemarch* without a bookmark that's up to the task. It helps if the bookmark somehow matches your book's subject. In my King James Bible, I use a handsome freebie from the National Cathedral gift shop showing one of the cathedral's breathtaking stained glass windows. Perhaps the only bought bookmark I've ever used has Garfield the cat pointing toward the page and asking: "Does your mother know you're reading this stuff?" (I used it in middle school when my friends and I were going through a Stephen King phase.)

The best bookmarks, however, are always items appropriated for the purpose. My library has become a kind of substitute scrapbook, safekeeping mementos: concert, movie, and sports tickets, postcards from friends visiting exotic locales, and old photos, all tucked away between the pages, awaiting rediscovery. While flipping through an old textbook recently, I found a ticket stub from the Michigan Theater, a beautiful 1920s movie palace in Ann Arbor restored to its original, baroque glory. When it wasn't showing new art-house trash, the theater ran classics like *Casablanca*, *Top Hat*, and *Citizen Kane*. I would glide through the gilded lobby with my Milk Duds, slip into the dark theater, and time-travel back to the 1940s—it was like seeing the movies when they were first released. Finding that stub in the book brought pleasant memories flooding back.

In this multimedia, bibliophobic age, the word "bookmark" is likely to remind a young whippersnapper of all the websites for porn and copyright-infringing music-sharing he has "bookmarked" on his Web browser, rather than of some years-old wedding invitation keeping his place in a copy of *Anna Karenina*. If ever, God forbid, "e-books" become the norm, what will happen to the bookmark? I'd be sorry to lose it. Like the guide on a long journey, a good bookmark keeps you from losing your way, gently chides you for your lack of progress, and brings you cheer by reminding you how far you've come. Not bad, for a little piece of paper.

Lee Bockhorn

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SECURING CYBERSPACE

Society views the burglary of homes and businesses as criminal and invasive. Computer break-ins, on the other hand, are often seen as mischievous pranks. Yet both crimes harm innocent people and businesses around the world.

Every year, criminal hackers intentionally release malicious software programs that disable millions of computers, compromise sensitive information and require significant resources to eradicate viruses and rebuild computer systems. These attacks result in billions of dollars in damage to the United States and other global economies.

Although technology is becoming more secure, cybercrime has increased as Internet use has risen. In fact, according to the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Coordination Center at Carnegie Mellon University, the number of cybersecurity incidents more than doubled to nearly 53,000 last year. In the first three months of 2002 alone, CERT counted nearly 27,000 incidents.

Our justice system needs better tools for fighting cybercrime.

Despite the sharp increase in malicious viruses and network break-ins, many offenders are not held accountable or punished for their crimes. Because the law in the Philippines did not criminalize the intentional release of computer viruses, the individual responsible for the "ILOVEYOU" virus, which caused an estimated $8 billion in damage, was never charged with any crime. Even in the United States, where cybercrime is subject to the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, convicted cybercriminals often serve little or no prison time. Sentences for violations are determined by calculating the actual economic loss, difficult to establish accurately in the context of computer crime, and are limited to 10 years.

Taking cybercrime seriously is even more important in a post-September 11 world. Security experts warn that terrorist organizations and hostile nations may employ hackers to target U.S. commerce, telecommunications and utility grids. The potential consequences are perilous.

In order to curb cybercrime, lawmakers should consider more forceful deterrents. The Cyber Security Enhancement Act of 2002, now before the U.S. House of Representatives, addresses weaknesses in current law by directing the U.S. Sentencing Commission to review and amend Federal computer crime sentencing guidelines. The bill empowers judges to issue appropriately tough sentences for computer crime by allowing them to consider intent, violations of privacy rights and the sophistication of the offense in addition to actual loss. Once enacted, the law will help deter cybercrime by subjecting hackers to real penalties for committing real crimes.

Legislators can promote cybersecurity in other ways as well. They can increase funding for law-enforcement personnel and funding for more training and equipment to investigate and prosecute cybercriminals. Hard-working police and prosecutors cannot win the battle if their equipment is not as sophisticated as that used by criminals.

Greater cooperation among law-enforcement officials in all countries is also needed. Because cybercriminals operate across international borders, an international law-enforcement framework is needed to establish minimum liability and penalties for cybercrime.

Action is needed to foster the sharing of information between industry and government about vulnerabilities and threats to critical technological infrastructures. Currently, companies are reluctant to share information because existing law may not adequately protect sensitive or proprietary information provided to federal agencies. Legislation that clarifies and strengthens existing Freedom of Information Act exemptions would encourage more companies to participate in initiatives to protect critical infrastructures.

By passing the Cyber Security Enhancement Act of 2002 and continuing to explore other options for promoting increased cybersecurity, Congress has the opportunity to play an important role in emphasizing the seriousness of cybercrime and in providing a safer, more secure world.

One in a series of essays on technology and society. More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

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Correspondence

Over-Taxed

I would like to respond to David Brooks's assertion in "The Problem with K Street Conservatism" (June 24) that the stimulus package "contained almost no conservative ideas . . . practically no ideas of any sort." Brooks claimed the bill was just "pork" and "self-serving subsidies" and "narrowly focused favors." I am sorry to say that he appears to understand little about the economics, tax policy, and politics of the bill.

The most serious problem with the economy in the summer and fall of 2001 was a dramatic drop in business investment. Encouraging investment was the most sure-fire approach to reestablishing economic growth, and the stimulus bill was designed to do just that.

Our conservative values tell us that increasing output in our economy and creating wealth should be a high priority. The primary intention of the stimulus bill was to get the economy growing again by reversing the trend in investment. The centerpiece of the bill was accelerated depreciation, which is known to be a highly effective tool for encouraging investment. More capital investment increases productivity, and greater productivity leads to greater wealth.

Even a casual analysis of recent economic indicators clearly shows that the economy is responding to the favorable tax policy we enacted. The manufacturing industry is growing at its fastest rate in two years and factory orders recently jumped. Unemployment has dipped back below 6 percent.

Meanwhile, the longer-term drive for fundamental tax reform is as strong as ever. But as a review of our tax history will tell you, a radical overhaul is unrealistic. While the "true believers" tout radicalism and call for an entirely new tax code and outline their various "ten year plans for reform," we have moved forward with incremental but significant improvements to our system and we will continue to make reforms. The Bush tax cut lowered individuals' tax rates to encourage work and saving. The stimulus bill lowered the effective rate of taxation on capital and thus was a step forward toward a tax system that promotes faster growth and a higher standard of living. We now must work to make accelerated depreciation permanent. In sum, we are consistently and successfully advancing conservative, pro-growth tax policy.

Alex Brill
Senior Tax Economist
House Ways & Means Committee
Washington, DC

Reviewer Reviewed

Thanks for offering a summary of my book *The Fifty-Year Wound: The True Price of America's Cold War Victory* in The Standard Reader (June 24).

Those of us who worked for Ronald Reagan's election knew we could win the Cold War—but listening to Republicans in the 1970s as much as to Democratic elites, we were aware that it could well be lost by increasingly ineffective leadership. Victory went to an America mobilized by Reagan and the new techniques and attitudes he brought with him. The notion that the sacrifices were light, or strategy consistently correct, would do credit to Dr. Pangloss, but not that grim reckoner of cost, Dwight Eisenhower.

President Bush is sounding "a call to arms." So he should be. But if he is rallying to the policies which cracked America's determination in the '60s, fawned on Mao, produced a ludicrous détente and arms control minuet with Moscow in the '70s, threw away victory (or a Cold War version thereof) in Vietnam, and indulged manipulation by European allies throughout, then today's crusade will be costlier still.

Most long struggles—look at the Civil War—are records of misjudgment and failure, redeemed if at all by triumph at the end. The use of recriminating about the past, said Churchill, is to enforce action in the present. For your reviewer to conclude otherwise is jejune.

We won. We ought to have won—and faster. But we owe it to our dead, to those who suffered from so many lost opportunities, to do far better, to get it more nearly right this time. The winners too often take victory for granted. There is little return on just celebrating the last triumph, as conservatives usefully reminded us in the 1950s about the 1940s.

I offer no alternative to the Cold War record of swinging between heated overcommitment and giving up too soon? Of course I do. It was to deal purposefully with the Soviet Union by cutting off the cash and technology, going on the ideological offensive, confronting Moscow's third-world clients, and, along the way, being prepared to bleed the Russians to their knees in an arms race. How that was finally done after January 20, 1981—and why it worked against a dying empire far more dangerous than has previously been understood—occupies the last third of my book, along with lessons for the war today.

Derek Leebaert
Washington, DC

Pride Before the Fall

As the "one Ralph Luker" to whom The Scrapbook (July 1/July 8) refers, I repent of any contribution to its treasure of undue pride. The point of my article on the History News Network website was to ask for journalistic restraint while authorities at Emory University reach a conclusive judgment in the case of Michael Bellesiles.

I challenge The Weekly Standard to bring formal charges, instead of journalistic huff 'n' puffery, to the attention of authorities in the Organization of American Historians or the American Historical Association. Like the secular courts of the land, those authorities do not have powers of arrest or accusation.

As for the two-year delay in the King Papers Project's revelation of plagiarism in Dr. King's dissertation mentioned in The Scrapbook, I would have hoped that The Weekly Standard would have had the courage to break the story. At the King Papers Project we did what was necessary to ensure that the story appeared in a timely manner.

Ralph Luker
Atlanta, GA

• • •

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We promised.

Two years ago, we made a promise to the United Nations: America would pay its overdue UN bills, a debt that was straining the UN's ability to do its job. For the last two years, we've kept our promise and that's helped the UN make a difference, for example, making it easier for girls around the world to gain access to an education.

But with a third payment still due, we haven't kept the promise of the 1999 Helms-Biden legislation. We should do so now. Congress should act quickly to complete legislation to settle our UN debt.

At a time when U.S. leadership in the United Nations is so important to the success of the UN's efforts around the world, we must keep our promise.

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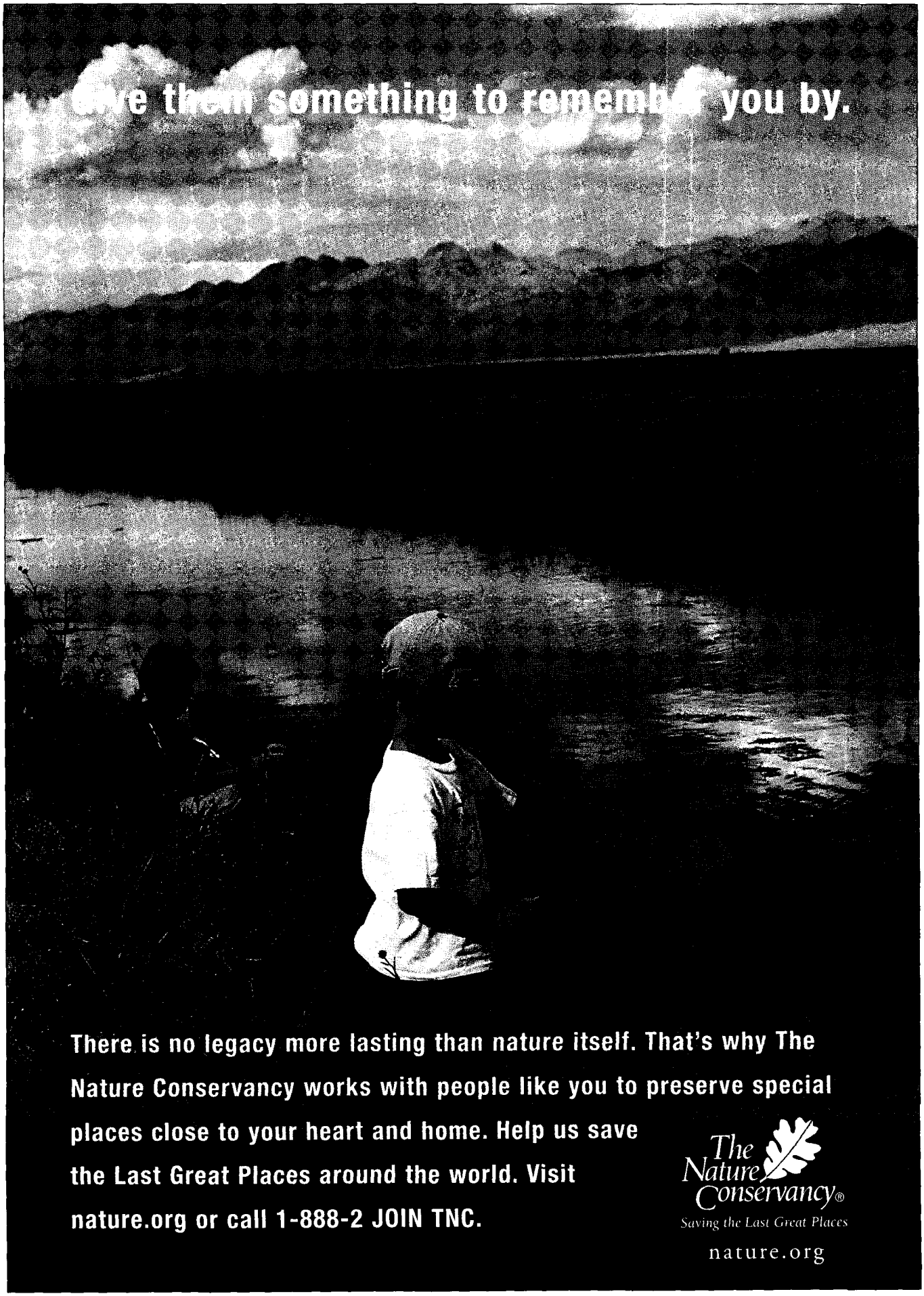

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the weekly Standard

The Bush Doctrine Comes to Cuba

Fidel Castro, always full of bluster, says Cuba will never change its socialist ways. He says he might cut off ties with America altogether by shutting down the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. He's threatening to flood America with a new wave of refugees. We've heard all this before. It's Castro boilerplate.

But there is something new. Cuba is now in deeper trouble, both economically and politically, than at any time in the 43 years of Castro's rule. Not only is Castro slipping mentally and physically, but he's lost most of his friends around the world. Venezuela, whose president is onetime Castro acolyte Hugo Chavez, has halted shipments of subsidized oil, forcing Cuba to institute blackouts. Despite Castro's grousing, the Russians dismantled their massive Cold War listening post in Cuba after having terminated their annual multi-billion dollar subsidy a decade ago. Since September 11, the flow of European tourists has slowed so drastically that 12,000 hotel rooms have been closed up. And the sugar crop, once Cuba's chief export, is approaching its lowest levels of production in more than a century.

Now is not the time to bail out Castro and his failed regime. Yet that's precisely what a growing group of lobbyists and business leaders want.

With the pressure on, now is not the time to bail out Castro and his failed regime. Yet that's precisely what a growing group of business leaders, agricultural lobbyists, and members of Congress want the United States to do. They're clamoring to lift the trade embargo, the travel ban, and the requirement that Cuba use only cash, not credit, in buying U.S. medicine and food. The argument is that an opening to Cuba will lead to liberalization and maybe even democracy. It's a bad argument.

We know this from the way dictators act generically, and Castro specifically. Tyrants—Stalin, Hitler, Saddam, Arafat—regard concessions by their foes as acts of weakness to be exploited. But pressure, external and internal, is another matter. Dictators cannot ignore pressure. They must respond, and can thus end up being the ones who make concessions. When Castro has faced domestic economic pressure *and* America's steady refusal to open full economic relations—as in 1965, 1980, and the early 1990s—he's blinked. In 1965, he announced Cuban Americans could come pick up relatives at a Cuban beach. In 1980, he dispatched the Mariel boatlift. After Russian aid was withdrawn in the 1990s, Castro created a crisis by casting off hundreds of rafts with refugees eager to reach Florida 90 miles away.

But forced migration hasn't been Castro's only tack. Confronted by a deep economic downturn in the 1990s, Castro instituted free-market reforms. He legalized holding dollars. He allowed Cubans to open restaurants and hotels in their homes. He encouraged foreign firms to invest in joint ventures with Cubans. These reforms weren't sweeping, but the point is Castro didn't willingly adopt them. He was forced to, if only to relieve the pressure on his government. Pressure, not concessions, worked.

Castro is under far greater pressure now than in the 1990s. "In a country where unemployment and underemployment taken together exceed 50 percent, the average GDP per capita is a mere $1,500, less than every other western hemisphere nation except Haiti," notes Jerry Haar of the University of Miami. The experience of foreign investors, supposedly protected by Cuba's touted Foreign Investment Law No. 77, has been excruciating. They've been slapped with fraudulent back taxes and had their development plans stolen. The current economic slump has caused Cuba to default on debts to private banks and firms in France, Spain, Japan, Canada, Chile, and Venezuela. Last year, Cuba devalued its peso 18 percent. Nothing has worked.

The pressure has rattled Castro. Since President Bush announced his new Cuban policy of carrot and stick last May, Castro has been frantic, irrational, counterproductive. He insists the U.S. Interests Section is grossly violating Cuba's sovereignty by handing out free radios so listeners can tune into Radio Marti (or any other station).

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Castro maintains that free radios constitute a serious diplomatic breach. And rather than accept Bush's insistence on democratic and free-market reforms, Castro recently organized a petition drive in favor of socialism. Now he expects us to believe it was signed *voluntarily* by 99.2 percent of Cuban adults. The national assembly took up the matter and, after three days and 168 speeches, "irrevocably" declared socialism the way of life in Cuba. This, by the way, nullified the authentic Varela petition, gathered by democratic dissidents and endorsed by former President Jimmy Carter when he visited Cuba in May. It called for free elections and capitalist reforms.

Castro's hardline reaction might make sense if it were the only signal he was sending. But that isn't the case. Last winter, he issued no complaint when prisoners of war from Afghanistan were locked up at Guantanamo Bay. Just last week, Cuba celebrated America's Independence Day. And Cuba is so desperate for food that it stiffed its creditors earlier this year and plunked down $73 million in cash to purchase food in the United States. That was twice the amount of food Castro had initially planned on buying.

The truth is Castro has nowhere to turn but the United States. His only allies are pariah states like Iraq and Libya or Communist states such as China and North Korea. None is offering help. The countries with whom he's had economic relations aren't stepping forward either because they've been burned once too often by Cuba. "We've got him by the nuts," a Bush administration official says inelegantly. And it's true—unless the bizarre alliance of political left and right and corporate America prevails in its campaign to open full relations with Cuba. By unleashing American tourists, if only the curious ones, and allowing Cuba to buy food on credit, they'd give Castro a reprieve. Still, he would decide the terms of trade and what businesses would get to enter the meager Cuban market. And the Cuban people wouldn't be rewarded. The government takes 95 percent of salaries paid to Cuban workers. Socialism would stay.

Contrary to media reports, Bush's Cuban initiative did more than tighten the screws. It was a worthy precursor to his Palestinian policy, offering "a meaningful American response" in exchange for Cuban steps toward democracy, free markets, and private property. Not only would the bans on travel and trade be lifted, but the United States would provide humanitarian aid and scholarships for Cuban students. At the moment, Castro isn't ready to yield. But as poverty and squalor increase over the summer, so will unrest. This time, mass migration won't suffice. Castro may decide he has to strike a bargain with Bush. And that could be, at long last, the beginning of the end of his brutal, dictatorial regime.

—Fred Barnes, for the Editors

Michael Ramirez

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The Decline of Secularism

Is the judicial attack on the Pledge of Allegiance the last gasp of a dying era? BY JEFFREY BELL

IT SEEMS FITTING that the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' attempted deletion of God from the Pledge of Allegiance was eclipsed the next day by the U.S. Supreme Court's 5-4 decision upholding Cleveland's voucher plan.

The finding of unconstitutionality for the words "under God," by a three-judge panel of the liberal California court, has an almost antique ring to it. The decision was quickly and universally criticized as untenable and unsustainable by elected officials and legal commentators alike. Such jurisprudence is of a piece with the strict secularism that appeared headed for triumph in American politics a couple of decades ago, but is now in clear retreat. By contrast, the Cleveland decision, closely divided as the vote was, has the feel of a watershed moment in a broad shift toward a different, more favorable vision of religion's place in the public square.

For a sense of how far the political debate on religion has come, recall the "religion in politics" controversy of the 1984 presidential campaign. In a speech to several hundred clergymen in Dallas the day after the Republican convention ended, Ronald Reagan urged people of faith to become politically active, to avoid defensiveness about their right to bring a religious perspective to the national political debate.

Democratic nominee Walter Mondale instantly jumped on the speech with both feet, accusing Reagan of intolerance. He likened Reagan to an "ayatollah."

This sounded the gun on a debate that would rage between the two parties for a solid month and dominate the first weeks of the general election campaign. The debate ranged far beyond the merits and shortcomings of Reagan's Dallas speech. There was, for example, a protracted exchange over the obligations of Catholic politicians on the abortion issue between Democratic vice presidential nominee Geraldine Ferraro and recently appointed New York archbishop (not yet cardinal) John O'Connor.

The subject of religion made strategists in both camps uneasy. The dominant figure in that year's Reagan campaign, White House chief of staff James Baker, was reportedly aghast that a seemingly innocuous speech to Dallas clergymen had turned into the central issue, diverting attention from the accelerating economic expansion. He believed Reagan's position needed a vigorous, unapologetic defense, but was only too happy to leave the issue behind when the Democrats decided, some time in September, to move on to other matters.

While the "religion in politics" controversy was in the saddle, Democrats hemorrhaged votes in the South and Midwest. In the same time frame, the Northeast and West had no net vote shifts of consequence; these regions already favored Reagan, almost certainly because of the early

Jeffrey Bell is a principal of Capital City Partners, a Washington consulting firm.

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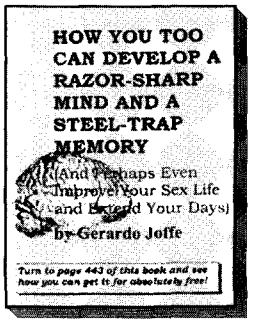

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bicoastal benefits of the Reagan economic boom.

Reagan's gains in the South, the most religious part of the country, made his already solid lead overwhelming. But even more striking was the increased support he found in the Midwest.

The Midwest, in 1984, had benefited hardly at all from Reaganomics. The larger part of the region was still known as the Rust Belt, and the rest of it had been hammered by a farm deflation. Reagan was running no better than even in most midwestern states in August. But by September, he had taken a solid lead in the region that he never relinquished.

Democratic strategists would experience more post-election pangs relating to religion in politics after the Dukakis campaign of 1988. The Massachusetts governor lost a substantial lead over Vice President Bush when the campaign was dominated by such subjects as prison furloughs, ACLU membership, and (yes) the rights and wrongs of requiring students to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clinton-Gore era in Democratic politics was a time of transition for the issue of religion in public life. New Democratic strategists such as Al From, William Galston, and Will Marshall succeeded at removing the issue from partisan politics. Galston recently recalled how in the 2000 Gore campaign he was responsible for arguing the case for endorsing the religion-friendly faith-based initiative already being pushed by Governor Bush.

Gore did endorse it, and while the faith-based initiative has seen its share of controversy, it has largely retained the bipartisan cast achieved in 2000. The two men who have headed President Bush's faith-based office, John DiIulio and James Towey, are both Democrats. The debate in the House was undeniably partisan, but the Senate version of the bill, the CARE Act, was revised after September 11 to achieve bipartisan support and is moving through the Senate with the backing, so far, of Senate majority leader Thomas Daschle.

Even more remarkable is the Democrats' reaction to the "under God" and Cleveland voucher decisions. It is hard to imagine similar reactions had either of these decisions come down in, say, 1985. In particular, the indignation of most Democratic officeholders at the idea of removing "under God" shows how far the party has come since 1988, when its standard-bearer proudly defended his belief that requiring students to say any part of the Pledge was unconstitutional. Today's reaction in part reflects a national upsurge of patriotism since September 11, but it also reflects the longer-term sea change in the politics of religion. And while less dramatic, the relative mildness of liberal and Democratic reactions to the Cleveland decision is equally interesting.

AP/Wide World Photos

One of Bush's trump cards was the Pledge.

Yale law professor Akhil Amar argues that the pro-religious trend in the courts in recent years is due to an application of the idea of equality to religion's place in the world of ideas. Religious schools and religious denominations are not being offered (nor do they seek) elevation above competing ideas, as in the bad old days of the established church. But gone are the days when the religious club is the only one not allowed to use school property after hours—or, in the wake of the Cleveland decision, when religious schools are the only schools parents are discouraged from looking to for alternatives to public education.

The secularism that has been so powerful in Western culture for the past century—and whose heirs are still on top in France and among America's social liberals—has always seen things very differently. Secularism believes that religion must be systematically excluded from the public domain, with a thoroughness not applied to any other belief system. Though they may tolerate religion as a purely private phenomenon, secularists believe any mixture of religious life and public life is by definition toxic. By almost any measure, this brand of secularism is in political decline in the United States.

American soil was never that amenable to secularism. The reason is not some higher spirituality, peculiar to our climate. The reason, as Amar suggests, is our founding commitment to equality. Tocqueville noticed that the triumph of democratic equality—which encourages a degree of separation and independence for religion—went hand in hand with a popular religious vitality not possible in the stultifying European state churches of his day. Nor does such vitality seem possible amid today's secularized European elitism.

The idea of equality has transformed the world, and the collapse of Marxism has underlined the simple fact that American-style democratic equality may be the most radical and most transformative idea of all. It is certainly the most persistent. And perhaps the biggest reason for its persistence is that beginning with the Declaration of Independence, most Americans at most times, and national leaders as different as George Washington and George W. Bush, seem to have believed equality was ordained not by us, but by God. The secularists' worst nightmare is to be found not in any house of worship, but in the continued life and dynamism of our founding documents. ♦

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Liberals Versus Religion

What the dissents in the Cleveland school voucher case reveal. BY PETER BERKOWITZ

THE UNITED STATES Supreme Court's 5-4 decision in *Zelman* v. *Simmons-Harris* upholding the constitutionality of the Ohio school voucher program was not really as close as it seems, at least not if the quality of the constitutional arguments of the majority is weighed against the quality of the arguments of the minority. As in sports, the final score can be deceiving. But the tendencies of the bad arguments employed by the dissenters are revealing.

Peter Berkowitz teaches at George Mason University School of Law and is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

Commonly, progressives or left-liberals criticize conservative judges for elevating abstract principle and formal rules over the real-life situations of the disadvantaged. Yet in their dissents, Justices Stevens, Souter, and Breyer displayed an aversion to people's actual choices in favor of choices made by the federal government, a strong preference for rigid principle over concrete political reality, and a strange solicitude for speculative future harm to the body politic at the expense of manifest actual harm to flesh and blood low-income citizens in the here and now. Since such tendencies seldom play so prominent a role in the thinking of the more liberal justices—who are more likely to emphasize context, pragmatic considerations, and substantive justice, particularly for the least well off in society—what brought these tendencies to the fore in the case of school choice?

Judging by the intellectual inadequacies and overheated rhetoric of the dissents, the answer, I think, is anti-theological ire.

The majority opinion, written by Chief Justice Rehnquist and joined by Justices O'Connor, Scalia, Kennedy, and Thomas, is relatively straightforward. As a response to Cleveland's failed public schools, among the very worst in the nation, Ohio crafted a school choice program. The program gives low-income urban parents a variety of options for the education of their children, including cash vouch-

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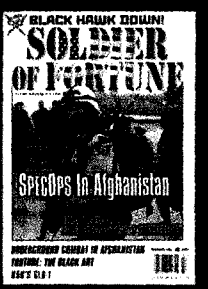

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ers that parents can use if they wish to send their children to participating public schools, or participating private schools, religious or secular.

Of the parents who chose the voucher option in the 1999-2000 school year, 96 percent chose to send their children to religious private schools. But the families who chose the voucher option—about 3,700—represent only about 5 percent of the more than 75,000 eligible Cleveland families; the rest chose other options offered by the program, including community schools, magnet schools, and remaining in public schools and receiving tutorial aid from the state.

The majority opinion held that the Ohio program and those like it are constitutional, and do not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, so long as they are neutral in respect to religion and permit parents to exercise "true private choice." Private choice is truly exercised when "government aid reaches religious schools only as a result of the genuine and independent choices of private individuals." Because of the variety of options that Ohio offers Cleveland schoolchildren and their parents, no reasonable observer, held Rehnquist, could view the program as advancing or endorsing religion. In choosing to use vouchers to send their children to religious schools, Cleveland parents, stressed Justice Thomas in his concurrence, were exercising their fundamental liberty to educate their children as they deem best.

The dissenters disagreed vehemently. But among themselves they agreed that the harsh realities and unquestioned harms suffered by low-income, mostly minority schoolchildren in Cleveland should not be allowed to override the hallowed principle of strict separation of church and state for which, they asserted, the Establishment Clause has always stood.

In his dissent, Justice Stevens showed his unyielding allegiance to the principle of strict separation by going so far as to argue that the magnitude of the educational deprivation suffered by the Cleveland students and the complexity and indirectness of the interaction between church and state in the challenged program (of which the majority made much) had no bearing on the Ohio program's constitutionality.

Never mind "the severe educational crisis that confronted the Cleveland City School District when Ohio enacted its voucher program," wrote Stevens. Never mind "the wide range of choices that have been made available to students *within the public school system*" (italics in the original). And never mind "the voluntary character of the private choice to prefer a parochial education over an education in the public school system." What was absolutely decisive in Justice Stevens's mind, and what rendered the "Court's decision profoundly misguided," was that in violation of the Establishment Clause, it "authorizes the use of public funds to pay for the indoctrination of thousands of grammar school children in particular religious faiths."

Such indoctrination can only lead to political disaster of monumental proportions: "I have been influenced," Justice Stevens concludes, "by my understanding of the impact of religious strife on the decisions of our forbears to migrate to this continent, and on the decision of neighbors in the Balkans, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East to mistrust one another. Whenever we remove a brick from the wall that was designed to separate religion and government, we increase the risk of religious strife and weaken the foundation of our democracy."

Justice Souter, in a dissent joined by Justices Stevens, Ginsburg, and Breyer, decried the "doctrinal bankruptcy" of the majority's opinion. He too acknowledged that the situation in the Cleveland public schools was dire, but insisted that the rigid principle of strict separation left him no choice: "If there were an excuse for giving short shrift to the Establishment Clause, it would probably apply here. But there is no excuse. Constitutional limitations are placed on government to preserve constitutional values in hard cases, like these." Souter, however, did not actually find the case a hard one. In the Ohio program, he held, "every objective underlying the prohibition of religious establishment is betrayed."

Indeed, for Souter the "enormity of the violation" was all but unprecedented. Citing a sentence fragment from Jefferson's "Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom" in Virginia, Souter appeared to embrace the uncompromising view that any tax money that in any way reaches a religious organization is antithetical to freedom. Then, citing a sentence fragment from Madison's "Memorial and Remonstrance," Souter seemed to argue that every form of indirect aid to religion involves the state in the shackling of young minds. And citing no authority and offering not a scintilla of evidence from any source, he warned of a political crisis stemming from the "divisiveness permitted by today's majority."

Justice Breyer, in a dissent joined by Stevens and Souter, proclaimed that he wrote separately "to emphasize the risk that publicly financed voucher programs pose in terms of religiously based social conflict." According to Breyer, "avoiding religiously based social conflict" has always been the underlying purpose of the Establishment Clause. Citing University of Chicago law professor Philip Hamburger's exhaustively detailed new book *Separation of Church and State*, Breyer creates the impression that in the 20th century the Court elaborated an Establishment Clause jurisprudence that strictly separated church from state in large measure to protect Catholic minorities from persecution by Protestant majorities.

Permitting the Ohio program, according to Breyer, represents an abandonment of the obligation to protect minorities. Indeed, he believes the program to be "contentious" and "divisive" and to promise "great turmoil" and "religious strife," though like Souter he fails to offer any evidence that the Ohio program

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has actually generated these unhappy consequences.

The more liberal justices, then, were in agreement that school vouchers fall afoul of the doctrine of strict separation of church and state, and that strict separation serves the core purpose of the Establishment Clause, which is to avert the breakdown of social and political life that comes from conflict over religion. This interpretation of the Establishment Clause and the doctrine of strict separation, however, is wrong. And just why is demonstrated at great length by the very scholarship on which Breyer relied—Philip Hamburger's richly documented study of the history of the doctrine of separation of church and state.

Contrary to Justice Breyer, what Hamburger actually shows is that "the constitutional authority for separation is without historical foundation." In the 18th century, according to Hamburger, the Establishment Clause was thought by most Americans to protect religious liberty by preventing *establishment* of religion by the federal government, but not to interfere with a variety of common *contacts* and *cooperation* between church and state. Indeed, the Constitution's prohibition on the establishment of religion by Congress was seen as consistent with—and a protection of—the establishments of religion that existed at the time in several states. In that context, Jefferson represented a distinctly minority view. He advanced the doctrine of strict separation as an expression of his general anticlericalism, seeking to go beyond the prohibition on national establishments to a ban on contacts and cooperation between church and state.

The doctrine of strict separation picked up steam in the mid-19th century, and reached full speed in the 20th century Establishment Clause cases. Throughout its history, Hamburger emphasizes, the doctrine has been primarily used not to enlarge the sphere of religious liberty, which was the original purpose of the Establishment Clause, but to restrict and subvert the liberty of religious minorities.

Contrary again to Justice Breyer's view, in the 19th and 20th centuries strict separation of church and state was not the principle that restrained intolerance of Catholics. Rather, as Hamburger demonstrates, strict separation was used to advance that intolerance: Protestants with nativist sympathies invoked it to deny aid to Catholic schools, while at the same time they saw it as permitting public aid to public and private schools that taught a generalized Protestantism.

From the perspective of those who led the way in building up the authority of the doctrine of strict separation in 20th century constitutional law, what was "divisive" was not the subtle establishment of a majority (Protestant) religion (or later the establishment of a secular orthodoxy), but the reluctance of Catholics to send their children to the majority's public schools and thereby participate in the establishment of Protestantism (and later of secular orthodoxy). Eventually the anti-Catholic implications of the doctrine of strict separation were broadened to include a more general suspicion of all religious organizations.

The not-so-subtle message of all the dissents is that religion teaches intolerance and encourages anti-democratic propensities.

So while Justice Breyer and his fellow dissenters are wrong about the historical lineage of the doctrine of strict separation and the actual purposes to which it has been put, they share a purpose with strict separationists of the past. Betraying a hostility to any religious education different from the education the majority receives, the more liberal justices use the doctrine of strict separation to limit the reach of such religious education. The hostility can be seen in their rhetorical strategy, which cuts against Court precedent: They focus on where government money ends up—religious schools—and downplay how it gets there—private decisions made by parents to improve their children's educational opportunities.

The hostility of the more liberal justices to the use of government funds at religious schools in turn often seems to be rooted in hostility to religion itself. This hostility or prejudice can be seen in Justice Stevens's equation of education at religious schools with "indoctrination." It can be seen in Justice Souter's view that religious education deprives the faithful of freedom of mind. And it can be seen in the view expressed most forcefully by Justice Breyer that religious education is incurably divisive. The not-so-subtle message of all of the dissents is that religion teaches intolerance and encourages anti-democratic propensities, and for this reason the state must limit to the extent possible the flow of government money to religious organizations.

Vouchers are not a solution to all of the ills of our nation's public schools, though they can be crafted to be consistent with efforts to reform failing public schools, and indeed thoughtful proponents of vouchers see them as part of such reform. Furthermore, vouchers have held little appeal for the suburban middle class, whose members are generally satisfied with the public schools that their children attend. But vouchers and school choice receive strong support from some low-income parents who want alternatives to the broken down public schools their state and city governments offer them. An interpretation of the Establishment Clause that forbids such programs is in tension with the imperatives of justice. As it happens, such an interpretation is also in tension with the original and more constitutionally sound understanding of the Establishment Clause. ♦

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Dear Alan Greenspan

This is no time to retire.

BY IRWIN M. STELZER

SAY IT AIN'T SO, ALAN. Say you have no intention of retiring. Sure, you are 76 years old, and your term is due to expire in 2004. So retire now, you are being told, and give the president an opportunity to name a replacement before the 2004 campaign season is upon us. Get out while the getting is good. And be remembered as the man who bowed out gracefully after slaying, or at least mortally wounding, the business cycle.

When you were confirmed by the Senate on August 3, 1987, the nation's output of goods and services was worth less than half of what it is today. And the Standard & Poor's index of 500 stocks stood at about 320 (and would quickly fall to 225, wiping out $1 trillion in wealth and greeting you with your first crisis); even after recent batterings that have sweated a lot of irrational exuberance out of share prices, the S&P index is now well over 900, a trebling since you took the reins of the Federal Reserve Board.

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So why not cash in now, and leave a hero, taking credit for the enormous increase in wealth, productivity, and output?

The answer is easy: because stepping down is not in *your* interest. I know: You are accustomed to hearing that you have to stay because the national interest demands a steady, experienced hand on the economy's tiller during this period when capitalism itself has been brought into ill repute by a handful of capitalists, a war on terror is revving up, and the fiscal situation borders on the chaotic.

As your friends at the New York Fed would say, fuggedaboutit. The economy got on pretty well for a couple of hundred years before you came along, and it will do so after you leave. After all, you know as well as any other student of Ayn Rand that it is the millions of individual, hard-working Americans toiling long hours, earning and spending with glee, and keeping the mall tills ringing and the construction crews busy building bigger houses who, along with risk-taking entrepreneurs, drive the economy.

No, don't stick around out of any overblown sense of your own importance. Instead, remain in the chairman's seat because it is in your interest to do so. And by pursuing your interest, you will be led as if by an invisible hand . . . well, you of all people know the rest of Adam Smith's brilliant observation about the responsible and humane pursuit of self-interest.

Consider the alternatives. Would you be happy roaming the world, Clinton-like, in pursuit of the next speaking fee and the sound of at least two hands clapping? Fortunately, you don't have the legal bills that awaited Bill Clinton, and therefore are under no compulsion to emulate him and the ghost of good King Hamlet, "doom'd for a certain term to walk the night" in search of dollars (they're depreciating anyway) and approbation. Even more important: Audiences who pay a lot to hear you speak would expect clarity, and after years of raising obfuscation to a fine art, simple, declarative sentences are no longer within your reach.

Consider, too, that in retirement you might be tempted to join one of those appalling senior tennis tournaments that are designed to lure aging athletes for whom still another round of applause more than offsets the twinge they must feel at having lost their panther-like agility, and gazelle-like speed. Or you might do something rash, such as try to find more time for your beloved clarinet. But Woody Allen and Len Garment have already snapped up the best bookings, and the repertoire has gone to hell since the days of Artie Shaw, Louis Armstrong, the Dorseys, and Woody Herman.

Finally, if you quit now you will have abandoned one of your lifelong causes. It is now clear that Congress and the president have neither the wit nor the will to make the Social Security system viable in the long run. Only individual Americans, by refusing to retire at 62 or 65, can do that. As well they should, since the retirement age was set when it was likely that a worker would be dead shortly after laying down his pick, shovel, and other tools. These days, we are living long enough to be able to work well into our eighth decade. What we need is someone to set an example, to show that we can work longer and still be happy, that by living longer we need not revenge ourselves on our children by becoming long-term burdens on them.

So do stick around, not only for this term but for at least one more, at the end of which you would be a mere lad of 82, far younger than the still-productive Milton Friedman. Unlike with presidents, neither the voters nor the Constitution stands in your way. And speeches, tennis, and the clarinet can't be nearly as fulfilling as keeping the economy on an even keel during an upheaval in the system of corporate governance and our war on terror. ♦

Irwin M. Stelzer is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD *and a columnist for the* Sunday Times *(London).*

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Our Ambivalent China Policy

Hoping to leave well enough alone is shortsighted.

BY GARY SCHMITT

SEPTEMBER 11 has affected American policy far beyond the Middle East. In the Asia-Pacific theater, in particular, the attacks and their aftermath have created a new dynamic that may work to the advantage of the United States in its competition with China for regional leadership. What remains to be seen is whether the Bush administration will take full advantage of this new situation.

To begin with, it's important to be clear about what has actually happened in the region since September 11. First, Japan took the unprecedented step of authorizing its military to operate outside its surrounding waters in order to assist U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. While this decision was viewed in Washington as a sign that Japan might be willing to start assuming the obligations of a normal great power, it surprised and shook the Chinese leadership.

Beijing counts on Tokyo's docility in security affairs, and the last thing it wanted to contemplate was Japan's shaking off its "pacific" past. By contrast, just before the 2000 election in the United States, a government-sponsored study co-chaired by Richard Armitage, now deputy secretary of state, had urged that the United States encourage Japan to do precisely that. Beijing was bound to wonder whether Japan's participation in Afghanistan was the first step toward its becoming America's "Pacific Britain."

Next, China's extensive effort over the past few years to create an anti-hegemonic bloc—that is, an anti-U.S. bloc—blew apart. Within days of September 11, Moscow had cast its lot with Washington, as did the various "stans" of Asia, including Beijing's longtime friend Pakistan. The United States now had troops and bases at China's backdoor. Add to this the new military-to-military ties between the United States and the Philippines, and the growing cooperation between Washington and New Delhi, and Chinese strategic thinkers had to wonder whether America's war on terrorism wasn't just an excuse to tighten the security noose around Beijing's neck.

Then, of course, there is the Bush Doctrine itself, a doctrine that sees the character of regimes as the critical factor in determining state behavior. The "axis of evil"—notably Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, all on friendly terms with China—consists of governments that cannot be trusted with weapons of mass destruction. Hence, changing these regimes becomes a strategic imperative.

Conversely, the Bush Doctrine puts a premium on working with, depending on, and expanding the realm of liberal democratic states. On his trip to Asia in February, the president made clear what his new emphasis would mean for the region. First, he indicated that his vision "for the security of the Asia-Pacific region" was tied to the "fellowship of free Pacific nations." Second, he reaffirmed America's "commitments to the people of Taiwan." And, third, he pointedly rejected the idea that Western-style liberties had no relevance to China's future, arguing instead that the United States would continue to challenge China's rule in the name of the "universal values that gave our nation birth." None of this was good news to Beijing.

Yet, apart from some early rhetorical blasts, Beijing's reaction has been relatively restrained. It's hard to say exactly why, given the closed character of China's government, but the most obvious explanation is that Beijing is preoccupied with domestic issues—especially a change in leadership at this fall's Communist party conference, and the difficult economic and social challenges posed by China's admission to the World Trade Organization. Moreover, with the 2008 Olympics on Beijing's plate, China's leaders are probably reluctant to do anything that might cause the international community to question that decision or keep their athletes at home, as the United States did in 1980 after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. But for whatever reasons, it appears that Beijing wants to avoid for the time being a serious confrontation with the United States.

As for how Washington in turn should respond, it's clear that the foreign policy bureaucracy, most Sinologists, and quite a few senior policymakers are content to leave well enough alone. Their goal will be to avoid giving China any reason to reverse its present moderation. They may even favor putting on the back burner plans to upgrade military ties with Taiwan or expand defense cooperation among our democratic allies in the Pacific in order to reassure China that we have no intention of pushing our advantage.

And there is evidence, in fact, that this is where U.S. policy is headed. For one thing, the administration has been sitting on the Pentagon's congressionally mandated report on the Chinese military. Although the report has been finished for some time, it has been buried because it makes a convincing case that China's military sees the United States as its primary foe and that China's growing capabilities pose a real threat to the region's peace and stability.

Then there is the recent statement by Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz on his May trip to the

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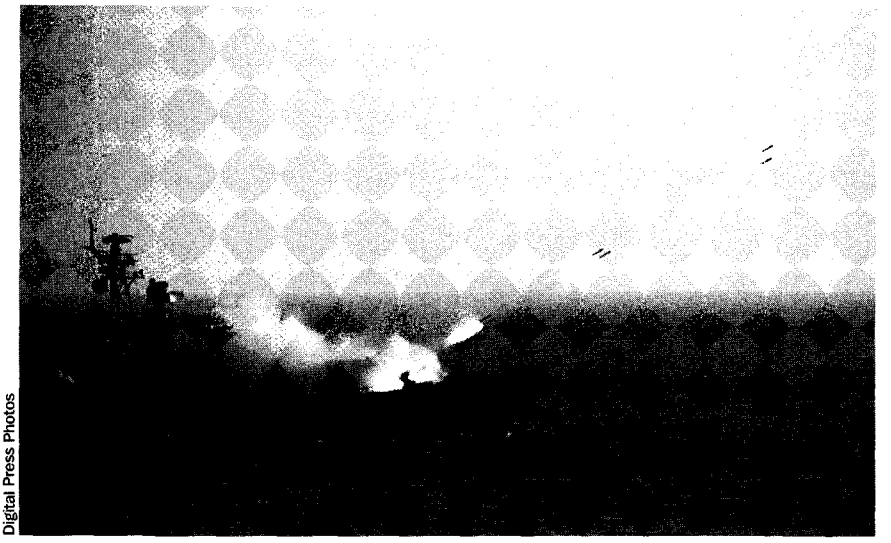

Digital Press Photos

Chinese military exercises, Sept. 18, 2001

region in which he poured cold water on the idea of creating new security arrangements among the democratic states of Asia. Despite the fact that President Bush spoke during his campaign of working "toward a day when the fellowship of free Pacific nations is as strong and united as our Atlantic partnership," Wolfowitz told reporters that he didn't think this was "possible in Asia or even probably at this stage desirable."

Those who support soft-pedaling our response to China's military build-up and putting on hold policy initiatives that might cause consternation in Beijing argue that, given all its current and imminent preoccupations (like Iraq), Washington doesn't need another arena for dispute. Moreover, there is the underlying problem of deciphering Chinese intentions. As Sinologists have pointed out over the years, the current Chinese regime's legitimacy rests on its ability not only to promote economic growth but also to protect the country's honor. But "national honor" is a slippery concept, and predictions about what will offend, and hence trigger a response, are at best educated guesses. As Michael Swaine of the Carnegie Endowment has recently written, we do "not know where all of Beijing's internal lines in the sand lie; indeed, the Chinese themselves may not know."

Of course, if this view becomes the basis for U.S. policy toward China, it can only produce paralysis. Everything becomes a potential source of conflict except steps to appease Beijing. Nor will such a policy succeed in preventing crisis. Once China's leaders catch on to what is guiding Washington—as they did with the Clinton administration—their expectations about Taiwan and their own place in the region will only grow. This will lead China, sooner or later, to take some step that requires a firm, perhaps military, response from Washington.

Furthermore, whatever moderation China is exhibiting on the diplomatic front, it continues headlong in its effort to undermine America's security guarantees in the region. Chinese military spending leapt more than 17 percent this year. And within the past two weeks, press accounts have had Beijing buying eight more Kilo-class Russian submarines—this in addition to the four already acquired—and testing Russian-made air-to-air missiles (AA-12) that could significantly increase Chinese air combat capabilities. This comes on top of the PLA's previous purchases of state-of-the-art Russian destroyers, supersonic cruise missiles, antiaircraft missiles, and scores of new fighter-bombers. And Beijing continues to add to the hundreds of medium- and intermediate-range missiles capable of hitting Taiwan and other neighbors already in its deployed arsenal. The overall picture is that of a leadership in a hurry to change the military balance in East Asia.

These acquisitions do not go unnoticed by our friends in the region. Privately, our friends and allies are wondering whether we intend to meet the challenge. Indeed, given our modest response to date, it shouldn't come as a shock that a debate has begun in Japan over whether Japan should acquire nuclear arms of its own.

The truth is that the United States can put off competition with China only so long. At the end of the day, China's ambitions make a contest inevitable. For that reason, the United States should be taking advantage of China's current preoccupation with its internal affairs to strengthen our hand in the region. Washington should so conduct relations as to leave no room for the Chinese to doubt that the United States is able and willing to turn aside any challenge they pose.

This means, among other things, working more aggressively with Taiwan to improve its defenses. The United States also needs to improve its own military capabilities by buying the right new systems to project power over the Pacific theater's vast spaces and by acquiring the additional basing rights needed to ensure access in times of crisis. Finally, the administration should follow through on the president's idea of creating a new security framework that integrates the democratic states of the Asia-Pacific theater. China will see this as a challenge. But once in place, it will reassure our allies, strengthen deterrence, and help the young democracies of the region stay the course.

At the moment, it's not clear which strategic path the administration will choose. The "let well enough alone" school has plenty of supporters. Given the pressures of the moment, this is not surprising. But it is shortsighted. Beijing shows no sign of slowing its military modernization, and sometime soon—perhaps when the leadership shuffle has been settled—China's ambitions toward Taiwan and the region will aggressively resurface. At that point, we may well be kicking ourselves for not having taken advantage of the present opportunity to shore up security in a region of vital interest. ♦

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The Coming Saudi Showdown

With friends like these . . .

BY SIMON HENDERSON

DELIBERATELY but without fanfare, Saudi Arabia has altered its relationship with the United States. Quite logically, and dangerously, the House of Saud has decided the proper reaction to the events of September 11 is to distance itself from Washington, seeking instead to firm up its support among the Saudi populace. Once this change is recognized, Saudi behavior of recent months stops seeming bizarre and becomes almost rational. When an unnamed senior Saudi official told the *Washington Post* in February that U.S. forces in his country had "overstayed their welcome," he was directing his remarks not to the United States but to the Saudi people. The same goes for the statement from possibly the same unnamed official to the *New York Times* in April threatening cut-offs in oil unless Washington changed its policy toward Israel.

In case the Bush administration failed to notice Riyadh's attempt to put some space into the relationship, the de facto ruler Crown Prince Abdullah played a more obvious card at the end of May. He sent one of his sons, Prince Mitab, to Pakistan to witness the test launch of a Ghauri surface-to-surface missile with a range of 900 miles. Also present at the launch site were North Korean scientists (the Ghauri is a version of their Nodong missile) and a delegation from Libya. Mitab's visit was unannounced, but Crown Prince Abdullah must have known that his son's presence would be noted by American intelligence within days, if not hours.

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The Bush Doctrine of "you're either with us or against us" can accommodate perhaps a little nuance. But putting a positive spin on this confab of notables from the "axis of evil," "state supporters of terrorism," and America's "friend" Pakistan would tax the verbal dexterity of anyone delivering the daily intelligence briefing to the president. This is probably why the long-awaited Bush vision for progress in Middle East peace turned out to owe so little to Crown Prince Abdullah's peace plan, revealed earlier this year in the columns of the *New York Times*. A major question had been whether Saudi Arabia could deliver the endorsement of the Arab world if the United States put pressure on Israel. President Bush always knew the answer was probably "no." He soon concluded that the House of Saud never really intended to put itself on the line.

In late May, Saudi crown prince Abdullah sent his son to Pakistan to witness the test launch of a missile made in North Korea.

The new Saudi policy appears to represent a consensus among the leading princes, now that the strongly pro-American 81-year-old King Fahd has gone to Switzerland for what insiders describe as "last-gasp" medical treatment. It appeals anyway to Crown Prince Abdullah's Arab-nationalist instincts. The next in line after Abdullah, defense minister Prince Sultan, is in no position to argue. He wants to be king.

The policy shift has not stopped a continuing PR campaign in the United States emphasizing Saudi Arabia's "strong support" for the war on terror. Some, however, in the chorus of the kingdom's supporters among oil-types and ex-ambassadors are bright enough to realize that even if the song sheet hasn't changed yet, things are different.

Where will all this lead? One of the more thoughtful people in the British Foreign Office mused last month that Saudi Arabia was changing by "drift rather than revolution," but that the result would be a strict Islamic state as antagonistic to Western interests as Iran. Short of Osama bin Laden, it's the worst outcome possible.

Within a few years, perhaps months, the military facilities in the kingdom will be closed to U.S. and British forces. The Combined Air Operations Center that controls operations over Afghanistan from the Prince Sultan air base is only a temporary structure anyway. The big question is whether the smaller Gulf states, nominally close allies of Saudi Arabia like Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman, will fill the void. Happily for the United States, they may well.

But with Saudi Arabia sitting on a quarter of the world's oil reserves and being the largest exporter, the question always comes back to oil. Before the Crawford summit at the end of April, Saudi officials let it be known that the kingdom was prepared to cut off oil supplies for two months unless American policy stopped being so sympathetic to Israel. Panicked but angry, State Department officials persuaded the Saudis to back off.

Given Saudi truculence, anyone preparing contingency plans to secure the Saudi oil fields in times of crisis might want to dust off their work. If Saudi Arabia did cut off oil exports for two months, much of the world might beg the United States to intervene to secure supplies. And with Saudi policy moving in an uncertain direction, it could happen soon. ♦

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Allah Mode

France's Islam problem

By Christopher Caldwell

Paris

Very soon, France is going to have to figure out whether people like Kamel Hamza are its salvation or its worst nightmare. Barely 30, born in France of Algerian parents, Hamza recently launched a telecommunications business that works with Bouygues and MCI in one of France's worst neighborhoods. Seine St-Denis, just north of Paris, is the most violent *département* in France. La Courneuve, where Hamza's company is headquartered above a nearly deserted mini-mall, is one of the bleaker corners of it. Seine St-Denis is marked by immigration (it's one-third Muslim), unemployment (30 percent in La Courneuve), and underclass violence (the area not only has a high murder rate but has also been a launching pad for anti-Jewish violence and vandalism in recent months). But what marks Seine St-Denis more than anything else is bureaucratized indifference. Until the late 1990s, decades after the region's factories had closed, computerless schools were teaching metal shop to their male students. This is a place where even the natives refer to their neighborhoods by their departmental postal codes. ("Come visit me in 93." . . . "Be careful walking around 95 after dark.")

Hamza has escaped the dead-end life most people lead in La Courneuve, and he's taken a half-dozen employees along with him. He's stuck around as a role model into the bargain. He's done it through hard work, entrepreneurial initiative, and values—for which he gives his religious faith a great deal of credit. Hamza fasts during Ramadan (as do three-quarters of French Muslims), avoids alcohol (as do two-thirds of French Muslims), and doesn't eat pork. "I'm French first, but also Algerian," he says. "*Français d'origine algérienne*."

Hamza likes to compare his identity claims to those of Bretons and other native French. He's wrong to. Bretons are looking backward; Hamza is looking forward. Hamza's immigrant parents lived by a code that he sums up as: *Don't call attention to yourself*. "I saw how my parents lived," he says. "I've learned a new way of living." His own code is: *Respect yourself. Don't complain. Keep your kids on the straight and narrow. Know where you come from. Practice solidarity*. That decidedly does not mean solidarity with the consumer/TV/sex culture that traps people in ghettos. "The people who succeed around here," says Hamza, "are the ones who keep their distance from the American culture of baseball caps and basketball shoes."

In fact, it means solidarity *against* Western culture, and at times Hamza sounds like one who has learned his values from some fiery imam's Friday sermon at a ghetto mosque. Hamza is a Berber (or a *kabyle*, as they're called in Algeria), yet when asked about the sociological differences between Algeria's Berbers and Arabs, which are large and enduring, he'll have none of it. "People create those distinctions in order to divide us," he says. (Who's "us"? one wonders.) "Our first step is to start with ourselves. If we're confident in ourselves, we can build a good society because it's not we who are practicing job discrimination."

France has a problem with its Muslim population that may be too multifaceted to solve. There have been Muslims in France since the colonization of Algeria in the 1830s, and there were tens of thousands as early as the 1920s, when France officially welcomed Islam in a gesture of gratitude to the Algerian soldiers who had shocked the country with their patriotism, self-sacrifice, and bravery in the Great War. The government, which is working desperately to formulate an official policy on Islam, now estimates its Muslim population at 4 to 5 million. Most social scientists believe this number is too low, speaking of as many as 8 million Muslims in France (and 12 to 20 million in the European Union). These numbers underestimate the weight of French Islam, since the population is concentrated and—thanks to a birthrate that, while falling, remains a multiple of the native-French one—extremely young. In parts of Paris, Marseilles, Rhône-Alpes, and Strasbourg, between a third and half of people in their teens and twenties are Muslim. These offspring of immigrants are referred to (and refer to themselves) as *beurs*. More invidiously, the word *jeunes* (or "youths") has come to be used as a euphemism for "Arab

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thugs," much as "inner city" served for decades as an American code word for "horrible black neighborhood."

France's Islamic immigration has been until recently something the country literally could not bear to think or talk about. This is largely a problem of historical guilt. Most Arabs in France are economic migrants from North Africa, where France waged a brutal counterterrorist war in the late 1950s and early 1960s against Algeria's FLN independence movement. The war involved widespread torture in Algeria (a subject painfully reopened two years ago in a memoir by Gen. Paul Aussaresses), the drowning of Algerian protest marchers in the Seine (revealed during unrelated investigations into the World War II activities of Maurice Papon, who was Paris's police commissioner during the murders), and the abandonment of Algeria's *harkis*, those who had fought for France against the FLN. Vast numbers were slaughtered, sometimes along with their entire families, for their loyalty to France. Those who succeeded in escaping across the Mediterranean were often greeted as an unwelcome reminder. When President Jacques Chirac declared a day of national recognition for the *harkis* last fall, it was hailed as the brave breaking of a taboo.

AP/Wide World Photos / Francois Mori

Booing the Marseillaise: A supporter interrupts the France-Algeria soccer match, Oct. 6, 2001.

As far as Islam is concerned, France has had a tendency to avoid looking at problems until they rear up on several fronts. First, France now has an underclass, made up of *jeunes issus d'immigration*. Second, there is an ongoing problem of racial discrimination, which is both a cause of Arab/Muslim poverty and an effect of Arab/Muslim crime. Third, there is Islam itself, which has confounded every governmental attempt to assimilate it into France's sternly secular constitutional order. Fourth, there is the rapidly increasing influence of *conservative* Islam in France, in the context of a global terrorist war that certain schools of conservative Islam have declared on the West. Solving some of these problems means exacerbating others. That may be why, according to a poll taken in 2000 by the National Commission on the Rights of Man, 63 percent of French people think there are "too many Arabs" in the country. This may be evidence of racism, but not of *knee-jerk* racism: Only 43 percent of Frenchmen say the same of blacks, only 21 percent of Asians, and only 19 percent of Jews.

What worries people at the most visceral level is the growth of a real Muslim underclass. In his book *La France et les beurs*, Zaïr Kédadouche, a former professional soccer player who has become an adviser to the mayor of Paris, refers to the housing projects of suburban Paris as "a Soweto that dare not speak its name."

In some areas, the underclass problems are exactly those of the United States. Sebastian Roché and other social scientists have coined the word *surdélinquance* to describe a phenomenon familiar to Americans as "the superpredator problem." As in the United States, there is worry that welfare payments are subsidizing illegitimacy. The *revenu minimum d'insertion*, France's guaranteed income, which hovers around 500 euros a month, is increasingly deplored as *argent braguette* ("zipper money"). Riots and other disturbances are underreported but frequent. Last week on July 4, gangs burned 20 cars in Lille to protest the suspended prison sentence given to a police officer who had shot an Algerian youth during a car theft. The dominant concept of the ghetto is now *respect* (pronounced, usually in a menacing way, as "woo-*speh*"). The word was the centerpiece in the presidential campaign of Guyanan leftist Catherine Taubira, and it is used increasingly in the political harangues of the poor and their tribunes. It sounds nice, but generally means respect only for those who can impose it by force. It means, if we may draw another American parallel, "Don't diss me."

There is this difference, though: Under the influence of Islam, a reactionary machismo has been established not just as a fact but as a reigning ideology. In a lengthy investigative article on the housing projects of Lyons, *Figaro*

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journalist Marie-Estelle Pech quoted a public school teacher as saying, "A young girl who respects the teachings of Islam cannot sit alongside boys." This segregation of boys and girls, according to Hugues Lagrange of the National Center for Social Science Research, has spread to many other aspects of life. Pech's interview subjects told her that a girl who wears a dress, or other well-fitting Western clothing, is "asking for it." She often gets it, too. The most alarming stories in Pech's investigation concerned *tournantes*, or gang-bangs. Girls who, for whatever reason, lack a father or brother to defend them get loaned out by their boyfriends to fellow gang members. In the United States, when the taboo against racism faces the taboo against sexism, the taboo against sexism prevails—i.e., people take the girls' side. Not so in France. Daniel Welzer-Lang, a sociologist whose latest book studies manliness and machismo in the ghetto, told Pech that *virilisme* is a strategy of collective defense, "in response to the fear of unemployment, of racism, of lawlessness, to the suffering of not being able to show other aspects of manliness."

Welzer-Lang may be politically naive, but the reality of discrimination must not be dismissed. At the very simplest level—that of political exclusion—one can note that Muslims now make up as big a proportion of France's population as blacks do in the United States, and that not a single Muslim (and not a single Arab of any faith) sits in the 577-member Chamber of Deputies. Fifty percent of France's unemployed are Muslims, according to Zinédine Houacine, president of the Arab/Muslim Union of Seine St-Denis. Over half of France's prison population is made up of people of "foreign origin," as is 43 percent of its reform-school population. Under such circumstances, there are not many employers in the country who are eager to hire *beur* boys. On the other hand, *beurettes*, as the girls are called, have a reputation as excellent students and reliable workers—which may exacerbate the impotent fury of young Muslim men.

There is no right answer to whether it is delinquency that causes discrimination or vice versa. But in its ability to set aside chicken-and-egg assignments of blame, religion provides a mighty tool for addressing such social problems right where they happen.

Muslims in France, like their compatriots, live in a godless consumer culture—but many are putting up a stiffer resistance to it. French Muslims are much more observant than French Christians. The most recent study of religious habits was made by the respected Michèle Tribalat of the National Institute for Demographic Studies in the early 1990s. To the extent that there has been a growth in practice over the past decade, her work will not have captured it. France's least observant Muslims, Tribalat found, were Algerians, among whom 10 percent of men and 18 percent of women constituted a religious-conservative "hard core." That is still double the proportion of French Catholics who practice their religion *at all*. Half of Turkish immigrants to France practice their religion, a figure far above that of Turks who remain at home. Half of Algerians and Moroccans—and two-thirds of Turks—still ask to be sent back to their native countries for burial.

Again, the masculinity of Islam creates differences in the quality, as well as the quantity, of piety. First-generation Portuguese immigrants to France, Tribalat found, are 41 percent churchgoing. But the vast majority of these are women. The French mosque, by contrast, is a masculine domain. As in North Africa, mosque attendance in France is only 10 to 20 percent female. With men running things, the growth of hard-line Islam becomes self-reinforcing. One incontestable conclusion of all studies is that, as neighborhoods become more monolithically immigrant, piety rises—or, to put it more precisely, hard-line religious conduct is more strictly enforced.

Tribalat notes that it is important to distinguish between France's Islamic immigrant populations, which are highly diverse. She's right—but only for now. Under the influence of mass media and one-size-fits-all government programs, the distinctions grow less important over time. In the United States, "Hispanic" identity—meant to embrace Argentine psychoanalysts of Italian descent and Salvadoran cowboys and Dominican santería priests—was a fiction two decades ago. But affirmative action and mass-marketing have made it a reality, as Chileans, Nicaraguans, and Cubans all listen to Ricky Martin on the same "Latino" radio station and all apply for the same jobs marketing Apple computers to Los Angeles Mexicans. Given globalism and the current habits of Western governments, it is all but certain that Muslims in France will constitute a single monolithic bloc in another generation. The big question is: Who will get to speak for them?

Down the street from Kamel Hamza's offices in La Courneuve is the Union of French Islamic Organizations (UOIF). This is the largest umbrella organization of French Muslims, and it is skewed to the far, far right of national opinion. (At its convention in Le Bourget in March, the UOIF drew 100,000 people to attend presentations on such topics as "Liberated Women, De-Natured Women.") The two dominant forces within the UOIF are Saudi Arabian foundations, which use generous subsidies to steer Muslim organizations towards profession of Wahhabi extremism, and the francophone

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branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, founded by the Egyptian Hassan al-Banna. A hard-line fraternity whose theories of Islam are at the root of al Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood has been increasingly active in France since the late 1980s. The European Muslim Brothers are under the intellectual leadership of Tariq Ramadan, the Swiss-born grandson of al-Banna himself. Now a university professor in Geneva, Ramadan is a sort of French-Muslim Noam Chomsky, a cheery, media-hungry radical, much in demand on campuses.

Most French Muslim institutions are to the right of national Muslim opinion. Practically all of France's 1,200 mosques are funded by foreign governments. Of the country's 230 major imams, none is French. In fact, imams are often chosen by foreign governments for loyalty to *their* ideological priorities. These priorities are decidedly not those of France. One imam in Roubaix met Lille mayor Martine Aubry on the edge of the Muslim-majority neighborhood where he preaches, declaring it Islamic territory into which Mme. Aubry—the most important minister of labor in modern French history, the early favorite to win France's presidential elections in 2007, and the daughter of former prime minister Jacques Delors—had no authority to venture. Mohamed Latrèche, a fiery Algerian-born Strasbourg preacher trained by aides to Hafez al-Assad in Syria, has recently started a political party called the French Muslims' party (PMF). His preachments are marked by vilification of Jews and little else. In May, he held a rally in Strasbourg with Hamas and Hezbollah representatives, at which flyers were handed out calling for boycotts of Israeli, American, and British products. Those with Jewish owners were marked with the Nazi yellow star and the German word *Jude*. Religiously sectarian parties are banned under the French constitution. So is anti-Semitic hate speech (and Latrèche's supporters do not even go to the usual trouble of replacing, pro forma, the word "Jew" with the word "Israeli"). But the French authorities have not chosen to take action against the PMF on either score—reportedly fearing that it would be a "provocation" to the group's sympathizers.

Alarmed, moderate French Muslims have tried to show a more secular road for Islam in France. Their arguments are amazingly lame.

Does this kind of radicalism "play" in the general population? There is some evidence that it does. The impact on national self-confidence of last autumn's France-Algeria soccer match, where a stadium full of French Arabs booed the "Marseillaise," is impossible to exaggerate. Many French residents and citizens have joined the ranks of terrorists—from Khaled Kelkal (who killed several people in train-bombings in 1995), to the gangs who rioted in the Lyons neighborhood for three days when Kelkal was shot by police, to Safir Bghouia (who went on a murderous shooting and bombing spree in the town of Béziers last summer), to Zacarias Moussaoui, who sits in an American jail for his possible links to the September 11 plot. The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Paris has assembled a list of 300 radical Muslim websites. To take only the most popular and "mainstream" of these, *oumma.com* runs photos of President Bush praying at the Wailing Wall over the caption, "That explains everything." It also urges surfers to join the Latrèche-sponsored boycott of Israeli and American products, warning readers that every time they buy Head & Shoulders shampoo they provide bullets the Israel Defense Forces will use to murder Palestinian children.

Zaïr Kédadouche says that "the vast majority [of young Muslims] just want to live in peace." Rachid Kaci, deputy mayor of Sannois in Val d'Oise and founder of the political action group Democratia, thinks the percentage of hard-core Islamists in France cannot be above 10 percent. Surely both are right. But Latifa Benmansour, an Algerian novelist and psychoanalyst who has been living in exile since violence overwhelmed her native city of Tlemcen, is much less optimistic. Her book on the rhetoric of the Muslim Brothers (*Frères musulmans, frères féroces*) was published to acclaim in France this spring. "Maybe it's only 4 percent," she says. "Maybe it's only 2 percent! It doesn't matter. When they take power—it's all over. When these kids say, *I'm Algerian*, I say, *'Oh, good, why don't you go to Algeria for a month? Why don't you go get arrested and see how you like Algeria?'*"

"The UOIF is the big problem," says Kaci. "Ideologically they control everything. It is they who are the interlocutors with all the poor kids of 14, and all the convicts." Fundamentalist proselytizers diligently work the housing projects and the prisons for new converts. Through Saudi Arabian subsidies—but also through the *zakat* (tithing) of a sincerely openhearted and pious community—they have succeeded in setting up an alternative social-service network that works, in many cases, better than the French one. You cannot talk to a Muslim from a poor neighborhood without hearing a story of a brother who robbed stores until someone from the UOIF took him down to the mosque, or a sister who was selling her body to feed

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her heroin habit until a Muslim women's group taught her self-respect.

Is Kaci merely attacking religious groups for doing good? Hardly. We know this problem from the United States: It's the Farrakhan problem. Mosques *do* rescue youths from delinquency, idleness, and all sorts of other ills. But in so doing, they become power brokers in areas where almost all disputes are resolved by violence and the most tribal kind of *woospeh*. And it is that mastery of a violent environment—not the social-service record—that these groups call on when they make demands on the larger society. The religious project may have laudable results in the short term—but those are incidental to the underlying political project. As Hanifa Cherifi of the French government's High Committee for Assimilation points out: "Neo-fundamentalism is not a matter of transferring a traditional society into the Western world." (These troubled kids' parents, after all, are not particularly religious.) As Cherifi implies, it is a modern strategy, aimed at consolidating political power over the long haul.

Even in the least radical corners of French Muslim society, one finds hints of a total distrust—to the point of conspiracy-theorizing—of French government and private-sector institutions, not to mention moderate Muslim ones. Where such distrust is not actually felt, it is feigned, in the hopes of undermining the legitimacy of those institutions. The Union of Muslim Associations met in La Courneuve in February to discuss how to solve the problems of France's Muslims. Eric Raoult, a conservative parliamentary deputy from Paris's eastern suburbs, suggested that a lesson in French civics might be a good start, given the across-the-board failure of any Muslim group to condemn terrorism after September 11.

Rachid Nekkaz, a Muslim radio personality, shouted that some groups had condemned them: "Such things were said."

"Well," Raoult replied, "they certainly weren't *heard*."

"That's because the media didn't report them!" Nekkaz countered.

And that settled it! The largely Muslim audience erupted in applause. *We're good people*, was the message. (And most of them undoubtedly are.) *It's just the media who are conspiring against us*.

In its dealings with its Muslim population, the French government, whether out of nobility or naiveté, has not reciprocated radical Islam's distrust. Each of the last four interior ministers has sought to bring Islam into agreement with the country's 1905 laws, which mandate a separation of church and state so strict that at times in the 20th century they were interpreted as barring professing

AP / Wide World Photos / Philippe Laurenson

The new France? Demonstration in Marseilles, April 3, 2002.

Catholics from political office. Unlike the American dispensation, which is meant to protect religious practice from political interference, the French one is meant to protect the political system from religious influence. In fact, it is designed to drive religion out of the public square altogether. This is why various controversies over permitting Muslim girls to wear the veil to public schools have been so explosive.

Each French government since 1990 has pursued two goals: to give Islam "a place at the French table," and to wean it from foreign influence. Each has failed. That's because most of France's Muslim organizations have sought to be brought into the country's religious fabric in a way that would allow for more public practice of religion. Under the recently dismissed Jospin government, the UOIF won the ear of interior minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, who pursued a strategy of negotiating with the "great federations"—shutting lay Muslims out of the discussion and letting the process be hijacked by the Pakistan-influenced Tabligh movement (which, in France, is called Faith and Practice), the UOIF, and Ffaiaca (a consortium of Islamic groups, of varying degrees of radical-

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ism, from France's former empire). Chevènement's successor Daniel Vaillant decided that he too wanted these radicals inside the tent pissing out. Dalil Boubakeur—rector of the Algerian-run Grand Mosque of Paris, who is sneered at by young Muslims as a petty bourgeois, and whom the French government therefore clings to all the more desperately as its last hope of pretending that practicing Muslims in France are predominantly liberal—warned that dialogue was delivering Islam into the hands of Saudi Wahhabis, whose faith had nothing to do with the malekite faith of most North Africans.

But let's be very clear about a paradox here: Taken in isolation, it is the Muslim side, and not the French government's side, that is most consistent with the American way of thinking about the constitutional protection of religion. Fouad Alaoui, secretary-general of the UOIF, okayed a secular agreement, only to stipulate later that he rejected a "definition of secularism that seals off religion in the private sphere." Thami Brèze, president of the same organization, called for a "modification of secularism, in order to respect certain specificities of Islam." In the French context, the Muslim side is calling for special status—in fact, for its establishment as *the only* religion that may be practiced in public. Chevènement's plan was, in fact, the hatching of a social catastrophe, an outcome that was averted only by accident.

If it was averted. Chirac's new interior minister, Nicholas Sarkozy, has promised the same groups he will continue the "national consultation" Chevènement launched. He may mean it. Chirac himself, whether as an alternative to this process or as a complement to it, seems bent on winning the *beur* vote through a media strategy that has much in common with Karl Rove's trolling for the votes of California's Mexicans. Parts of this strategy are already in place: The year 2003, for instance, has been designated "National Algeria Year" in France. But the new centerpiece of the government's *beur* policy is affirmative action. Quotas were considered an impermissible breach of French equality of citizenship five years ago, but they are now making their appearance. The prestigious Institut d'études politiques has announced that it will forgo its traditional meritocratic examinations in order to take 20 students in its next entering class from "precarious" school districts.

Zaïr Kédadouche still claims to oppose quotas, but he favors a directive from the European council of ministers that would impose disparate-impact hiring criteria on French businesses. Like most people in the French political center, Kédadouche deplores quotas in principle while insisting on them in practice. One of the dubious innovations of former minister of cities Claude Bartholone was a job-discrimination hotline, accompanied by a "reversal of the burden of proof" in any court trial over hiring discrimination. In such cases, it is now the employer who must prove he did *not* discriminate. Meanwhile, Chirac has appointed two *beurs* to his new cabinet. Given the inability of *beurs* to get elected to parliament, it's probably a good move.

The national consultation on Islam has satisfied almost nobody. No one has been more alarmed by the direction in which French Islam has been tending than the country's own moderate Muslims. These moderates have tried to show a different, more secular road for Islam in France. It is amazing how lame and unencouraging their arguments are.

The most intellectually dazzling of these thinkers is the Tunisian novelist and literary scholar Abdelwahab Meddeb. In his brave and brilliant book *La Maladie de l'Islam*, which will be published in English by Basic Books next year, Meddeb dismisses the Wahhabi version of Islam as "stupid and dangerous." He also insists that modern Islamic fundamentalism is a product of an image-conscious, ahistorical, televised worldview that he sums up as "the Americanization of the world."

Meddeb shows that, historically, Islam has been more flexible, more capable of separating religion and state, than the conventional wisdom gives it credit for, and much more so than the caricature promulgated by the new fundamentalists. He notes that in the Mutazilite era of the 9th century, when the caliphate was controlled by rationalists who believed the Koran was created rather than eternal, Islam was open to every sort of liberal possibility. Meddeb also notes that Afghanistan's Bamiyan buddhas stood unharmed in Islamic territory for 13 centuries before the Taliban blew them up last summer.

Unfortunately the Mutazilite interlude lasted all of a couple of decades, never to recur; nor did the Taliban show any receptivity to the Sufi rationale for allowing other religions' idols to stand. Any humanist would love to study the glories of Islamic civilization with a spirit as genial and free as Abdelwahab Meddeb. But what he totally fails to reckon with is that the caricature he so despises is the really existing Islam that Muslims themselves have put on the worldwide political agenda just now. Meddeb recently told a journalist for Agence France-Presse that the reaction to his book has alerted him that Islamic fundamentalism is a bit more virulent than he had realized.

Soheib Bencheikh takes much the same line. The grand mufti of Marseilles, educated at Al-Azhar in Egypt, Bencheikh has a reputation as France's secular Muslim *par excellence*, even if he has been given to spouting some

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of the left's wilder absurdities concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict. An Islam consistent with France's lay conditions, Bencheikh says, is within reach, provided Islam can return to the interpretive flexibility of its first four centuries. Like Meddeb's injunctions, this one is sweet, but absolutely meaningless. Only the worst kind of wishful thinking could contemplate assigning to religious believers an acceptably anodyne moment in their faith's history—and then asking them simply to dial their way back into the worldview of the time, as if they were in possession of a time machine.

Kaci and Kédadouche, meanwhile, are so deeply in sympathy with post-religious French society that they believe merely explaining the illogic of hard-line Islamic belief will open the eyes of the fundamentalists. Neither of them has any sympathy with those Muslim families who, battling France's secular constitution, have caused one national uproar after another for the past fifteen years by sending their girls to school veiled. "The veil shouldn't be a problem," Kaci says. "We just need to take girls aside and explain to them what the veil is and what it represents." Kédadouche sees Arab abstention from French sexual norms as a problem—in particular the tendency of *beur* sons to keep a watchful eye on their sisters' dates. "Sons often react like fathers," Kédadouche writes, "even if they're born in France and understand perfectly well the way young people live in this country. Sexuality is a real problem for the *beurs*."

But what if none of this suasion works? What if you explain the sexist roots of veil-wearing and a girl still wants to wear one? What if devout brothers, for some strange reason, persist in refusing to offer up their 14-year-old sister's virginity on the altar of ooh-la-la French hedonism? In short, what if Islam is somehow not assimilable into contemporary French constitutional and moral practice, in the way that Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism are?

Even to raise these points is to be accused of dealing in *amalgames*, or stereotypes, and to risk being excommunicated from the country's intellectual life. Political correctness was largely absent from France five years ago; its absence allowed a great deal of justifiable snickering at the United States. Today, especially on matters concerning Islam and especially since September 11, France's version of PC is imposed with a ferocity that has no equal in America. The Arab ex-Muslim Ibn Warraq, long a professor in the American Midwest but now resident in Europe, has been granted a certain leeway, because of his ethnic background, to argue in the French press that the Islamists are *not* necessarily misreading or "perverting" the core of Islamic belief. He goes further, arguing that Islam, properly understood, is incompatible with the Rights of Man as they are understood in France.

But those who lack Warraq's ethnic credentials are dealt with mercilessly. The mildly conservative, formerly anti-American foreign policy expert Alexandre Del Valle is a prolific author, published in *Politique internationale* and many of France's more prestigious journals. But after urging a vigilant fight against Islamism, he has been accused of "Islamophobia" in *Le Monde*, where the editors suspect him of being a "spy" for the Le Pen-ite extreme right. The Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci was taken to court for hate speech for her (admittedly somewhat hysterical) book *Anger and Pride*, which has sold a million copies in Italy. France's Movement against Racism and for the Friendship of Peoples (MRAP) sought on the basis of one sentence—"The sons of Allah are breeding like rats"—to have the book banned. The Islamic Center of Geneva has called for banning it, too. Other anti-racist groups have sought merely to require a warning label on the front cover. Meanwhile, even *to mention* the well-documented attacks by young Arabs on French Jews could be taken as evidence of anti-Arab prejudice, according to MRAP's secretary-general Mouloud Aounit. "Since September 11," said Aounit, "the taboo against Islamophobia has been broken. Certain people are jumping to conclusions, as when they designate young Arab-Muslims as a potentially anti-Semitic group."

Notice that Aounit is not "weighing the pros and cons." He is not looking for a "way for all of us to get along." He is demanding *woospeh*, in the uncompromising tone of one who believes he has both right and time on his side. The political philosopher Pierre Manent has written of war's "*pouvoir révélateur*" or power to reveal. The ordeal of war, according to Manent, exposes essential truths of a situation that the distractions of peacetime would otherwise have left hidden indefinitely. Viewed in this light, September 11 has made quite clear why certain of France's Muslims, or at least their political representatives, have refused to be drawn into the existing French order: They believe they have the stronger hand. Against "Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful," France proposes to pit its own national ethic, which has now shrunk into little more than tolerance. Let's not laugh at France for this—it is merely the country where a problem belonging to the West in general has become most clearly visible. It is in France that, under the pressure of Islam, the secular state is most in danger of being exposed as contentless, and therefore not worth fighting for—and where fears should be arising that, if secularism cannot be fought for as religions are fought for, it will not last long. ♦

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The *Real* Decade of Greed

Pssst . . . it wasn't the 1980s.

By James Higgins

"The 1980s were not just a decade of greed and self-seeking, they were a decade of denial and blame. George Bush is happy to tell Israel what to do. Why won't he tell Wall Street what to do?"

—*Bill Clinton, September 22, 1991*

Not even Bill Clinton's harshest critics could have foreseen what the headlines would look like a decade after he campaigned on that statement and after eight years of his leadership in the White House. Enron. WorldCom. Arthur Andersen. Xerox. ImClone. Tyco. Merrill Lynch. Credit Suisse First Boston. How did it all happen? The *Wall Street Journal* news pages intone that "a stock market bubble magnified changes in business mores and brought trends that had been building for years to a climax." That analysis contains a measure of truth, but it misses the larger forces that permitted undesirable trends to go unchecked until they burst. Today's news is different from the financial scandals of the 1980s not just in magnitude but in kind.

The corruptions of the 1980s were chiefly offenses by a few rogues *in* the system. Individual acts of wrongdoing stood out on the horizon and were punished. Already the names of the malefactors have mostly faded from public consciousness: Ivan Boesky, Martin Siegel, Dennis Levine, the "Yuppie Five."

The corruptions of the 1990s were corruptions of the system itself. Some of them relied on the non-existence of white collar law enforcement. Some relied on changing the rules to make wrong right. Most were hidden in plain sight. Offenders in the 1980s lurked on corners. Boesky literally repaired to an alley to pass Siegel a briefcase of cash in exchange for inside information. Their 1990s counterparts operated in the proverbial corner offices rather than on street corners.

True, there were scandals in the 1980s involving large institutions and large sums, notably the savings and loan crisis. But that crisis grew out of boneheaded public policy: extreme liberalization of deposit insurance and instant, massive changes in the depreciation rules. The corruption was on the periphery. Not so, it is now apparent, of the more recent class of malefactors.

One hint of what was wrong in the 1990s was the pervasiveness of shady practices and how long they persisted.

Consider the corruption of the initial public offering (IPO) process—which in theory is about allowing promising young companies with a track record of growth to begin tapping the public stock markets for their capital needs. In the 1990s, this became a get-rich-quick scheme for investment banks—who marketed wildly overpriced shares of infant companies that were barely more than concepts—the venture capitalists who owned these companies, and the insiders and their friends who were allocated shares at artificially low prices before trading opened. This game went on far longer and got much further out of hand than one would expect in an allegedly regulated market. The principals in a very reputable investment management firm told me of their dismay and disgust as they found their IPO allocations reduced and then eliminated altogether when they balked at ever more explicit demands for kickbacks in the form of excessive commissions on other trades. "We kept asking ourselves," they told me, "'Where are the regulators?'" Where, indeed?

The regulators came only after and because the party ended. It wasn't until December 2001, nearly two years after the peak in the equity markets and with a new administration in office, that the SEC and the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD) finally secured a $100 million penalty from Credit Suisse First Boston, whose IPO guru Frank Quattrone was widely believed to be the most flagrant corrupter of the process.

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In the avalanche of news following the Enron collapse, the repeated calls that Enron made to the White House and Treasury Department pleading for a bailout were widely reported. Notwithstanding many Democratic insinuations that the Bush White House was a wholly owned subsidiary of "Kenny Boy" Lay's Enron, the Bush administration turned Enron down flat.

Less attention has been paid to the call that Robert Rubin made to Peter Fisher, the Treasury undersecretary who is the administration's point man on financial markets. And almost no attention has been given to the content of that call. While the call was not a crime or even a civil offense, it was in an important way the most telling event in all the recent financial fiascoes.

Rubin, secretary of the Treasury from 1995 to 1999, is no longer in government. He is a director of the Citigroup financial conglomerate. Rubin is the *ne plus ultra* of eminent Clintonians. Indeed, after Alan Greenspan, he is the most respected figure in international financial markets.

The casual reader of the business press might assume that Rubin, whose firm is a major lender to Enron, asked Fisher for the same thing that Kenneth Lay asked Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill for: a bailout, some form of government financing. Not so—the request was both more subtle and potentially more damaging to the good health of America's markets. What Rubin asked for, by all accounts, was *for Fisher to call the debt rating agencies and ask them to find an "alternative" to a downgrade of Enron's securities.* (As a lender, Citigroup was bound to be injured by a downgrade.)

This was an astounding request. The rating agencies are meant to be neutral arbiters of the financial strength of the entities they rate. The request Rubin made of Fisher was akin to the owner of a team faced with playoff elimination calling the league commissioner and asking him to see if he can get the referees to call the next game so that the owner's team doesn't lose. This request was coming from the man who personified the Clinton-era financial establishment. Rubin reportedly prefaced his request to Fisher with the phrase, "This may not be the best idea, but . . ." Students of Watergate will recall that Richard Nixon once instructed his subordinates in how to gather hush money for the Watergate burglars, then ended the explanation with the phrase, "But it would be wrong." Nixon later pointed to that sentence as evidence of his innocence. *Plus ça change.*★

Republican campaign committees are already encountering a predictable challenge with potential corporate donors. The donors want to know why they should contribute to the GOP when Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-LA) is hauling them before the House Energy and Commerce Committee for public scrutiny of their conduct. This tension is a natural outgrowth of a system in which elected officials both oversee industries and raise funds. In Tauzin's case, the hearings have gone on as scheduled.

The Clinton administration had a simple way to resolve this tension: law enforcement had to yield to fundraising. It must have been difficult enough to persuade a CEO to come to the White House for coffee at $50,000 a cup. With pending securities law investigations in the background, it would have been impossible. So the dogs had to be called off.

Many of Enron's shenanigans grew out of an obscure, early-'90s regulatory opinion, EITF 90-15 (EITF being the Emerging Issues Task Force of the Financial Accounting Standards Board—the people who make the accounting rules). This opinion paved the way for corporations to take entities such as Enron's notorious partnerships off their corporate books if outsiders contributed even 3 percent of the capital to the entity. The other 97 percent of the capital could come from the parent company.

Where to draw the line about what goes on whose balance sheet is a complicated subject, one that accountants have grappled with for years. But the 3 percent rule undermined *the core principle* of American financial reporting: consolidation, the notion that what is basically yours—usually, something you own more than 50 percent of—should appear on your balance sheet. It is consolidation that gives you confidence that when you look at a company's financial reports you are getting a real snapshot of the company's financial condition. In the hands of Andrew Fastow and Jeffrey Skilling, EITF 90-15 and subsequent regulations were a license to create imaginary profits and hide genuine losses.

Surely, the EITF didn't intend the result it got. In another era, the authorities would have put a stop to abuses. But not in the 1990s.

The tale of Merrill Lynch and its now-famous security analysts has similar outlines. "Sell-side" analysts (those

★*In an early article for this publication ("Poor Mouthing Uncle Sam," November 27, 1995), I discussed the bizarre and partisan intervention by the Standard & Poor's rating agency in de facto support of the Clinton administration's position in the 1995 government shutdown. At the time I raised the question of whether Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, a former trader of broad acquaintance in the markets, might have encouraged Standard & Poor's to enter the political fray. No evidence that I am aware of has emerged to answer that specific question. But the Rubin-Fisher phone call answers the question of whether Rubin would ever attempt to influence the conclusions of independent rating agencies.*

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who work for brokerage firms, as distinguished from the "buy-side" analysts who work for investment management firms) should never have been compensated on the basis of how well they could promote the interest their employers have in underwriting securities. The conflict of interest was obvious all along. As the problem grew to elephantine proportions during the Clinton era, regulators did . . . nothing. The now-infamous Jack Grubman earned an eight-figure annual compensation package from Smith Barney for steering his firm's clients into the stock of WorldCom and Global Crossing—and, more important, for getting his firm underwriting fees from WorldCom and Global Crossing.

Now that regulators and law enforcement officials are finally dealing with this problem, they have a real mess to contend with. Many securities companies have merged and organized themselves to gain the profits that can accrue from having sell-side analysts and security underwriting in the same firm. Untangling this problem without sinking these firms, most of which have thousands of employees, in the middle of a bear market will be very difficult indeed.

Robert Rubin

AP/Wide World Photos

Clinton's chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) was Arthur Levitt Jr., former head of the American Stock Exchange and son of a legendarily upstanding New York State comptroller. To his immense credit, Levitt saw the outlines of many of the disasters that have since emerged and sought to address them before they got out of hand. Problems have appeared in audit committee structure and authority, in security analyst conflicts of interest, and in the conflict of interest posed when accounting firms audit the books of and earn consulting fees from the same client. Levitt had flagged *all* of these issues for reform by 1999.

Levitt might as well have been suggesting a program of intergalactic travel. In 1994, a private pilot crashed his small plane onto the White House grounds. Washingtonians joked (such things were funny back then) that the pilot was James Woolsey, the CIA director, seeking a meeting with a president who had no interest in Woolsey's agency. The joke could have been about Arthur Levitt and the SEC. With Levitt's proposals lacking the promise of fund-raising, improved poll numbers, or the Nobel Peace Prize, Clinton had no interest in them.

One of the anomalous and confusing aspects of the Merrill Lynch investigation, which lately led the firm to agree to a $100 million penalty over analyst conflicts of interest, is that the investigation was initiated by New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer. The New York attorney general is not the natural or primary enforcement agent against serious wrongdoing. That role is normally assumed by the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, in whose jurisdiction most of the securities industry is located. Ronald Reagan, whom Clinton accused of "denial" of ethical problems arising from greed, installed in that post Rudolph Giuliani. Giuliani went at his job with a vengeance, indicting so many Wall Streeters for wrongdoing that he still faced bitterness from the financial community when he first ran for mayor in 1989.

In the same job, Bill Clinton gave us Mary Jo White. This was the same Mary Jo White who could not find any senior official to indict when Ron Carey turned the Teamsters' Union Treasury into a mutual money-laundering facility for his reelection campaign and for the Democratic National Committee. White is the person who should have taken the lead in Wall Street prosecutions. But over at the White House, the money, to quote *Evita*, "kept rolling in from every side." White's boss, of course, was Janet Reno, whose name has become a synonym for a certain approach to law enforcement.

The system is in far worse shape when a central and respected figure like Robert Rubin feels free to try and rig the game than when an Ivan Boesky—who even before his arrest was thought by most in the financial market to be a shady character—is trading on inside information. Dennis Prager, the radio commentator and Torah scholar, has long emphasized the difference between a society with some people in it who behave immorally and a society in which the immoral change the rules to make their behavior acceptable. The latter situation, Prager tells us, is far worse. For any who had doubted the importance of this distinction, the news of the last six months has been an awakening. ♦

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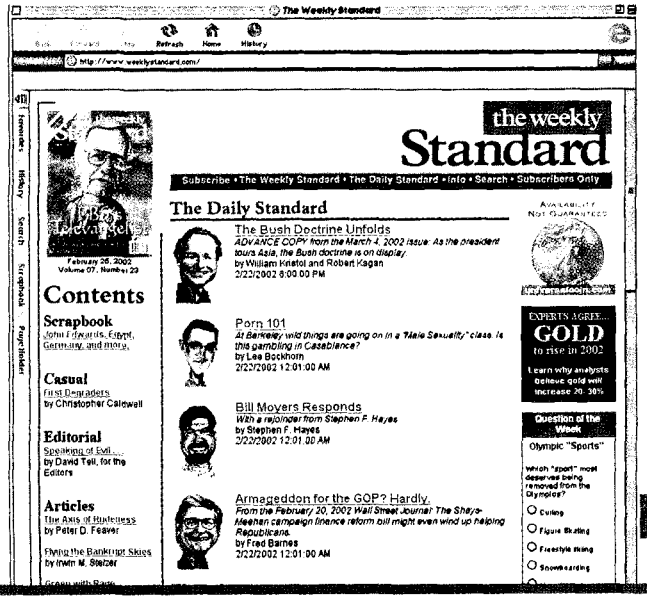

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The End of Thought

The life and times of an analytic philosopher

By Thomas Hibbs

An allegorical figure of philosophy by Giuseppe Cesari. Araldo de Luca / CORBIS.

Colin McGinn is a clever man—the very clever product of that very clever school of British academic thought known as analytic philosophy. His initial impetus for studying philosophy came, he says, from reading Bertrand Russell, and he studied with the formidable A.J. Ayer, the famed practitioner of the analytic style in its most pristine and most ambitious form, whose goal was to turn philosophy itself into science. McGinn is also the author of several influential books of philosophy, and he has taught at Oxford, UCLA, and, now, at Rutgers.

Add it all up, and Colin McGinn is peculiarly situated to provide a picture of the intellectual life of an Anglo-American philosopher in the twentieth century. Which is exactly what he's done in his most recent book, a memoir called *The Making of a Philosopher: My Journey Through Twentieth-Century Philosophy*. His goal, he says, is to present "philosophy in an accessible, engaging way," as a "lived subject, . . . part of a flesh and blood human life."

Judged by this goal, *The Making of a Philosopher* is a failure, largely because the abstruse topics characteristic of his brand of mainstream analytic philosophy are not at all conducive to reflections on life—his, or anyone else's. Indeed, the book depicts not so much the integration of thought and life as their unbridgeable separateness.

But there is another sense in which *The Making of a Philosopher* is a resounding success. As McGinn alternates descriptions of his philosophical thought with descriptions of his personal experiences, something profound about analytic philosophy comes into view. The emptiness of the philosophy proves to be a mirror—but which is the original and which the reflection?—of the emptiness of the life.

It must be admitted that McGinn has a powerful and energetic intellect, neatly divided between arid philosophical analysis and the quest for vibrant experience. Living on America's west coast, he plays video games and cruises L.A. listening to the Cars sing "My Best Friend's Girl." On the east coast, Manhattan provides "an escape from the obsession, a rude jolt of teeming life."

Meanwhile, he thinks about philosophy. The presentation of that philosophy is clear enough, although the attention lavished on technical debates over meaning, truth, and reference is odd in a purportedly popular book. The real problem is that McGinn is never able to adopt the standpoint of the non-analytic philosopher and ask why these topics are worth pursuing in the first place.

Indeed, McGinn's own philosophical journey ends with a whimper, in the conclusion that the human intellect is ill-suited to the task of philosophy—which may well be true: The arid inhumanity of analytic philosophy requires for its fulfillment a league of gods, or angels, or stones—anything but human beings.

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Only at one point in *The Making of a Philosopher* does McGinn describe a way of doing philosophy at "the level of ordinary experience" on the "neglected topic of life." It's when he talks of the time he began to use great novels as the basis for an investigation of the nature of evil. What insight did this study yield? McGinn's mildly interesting—although rather pedestrian—conclusion is that truly evil people "revel in the suffering of others" and are motivated by a sort of "existential envy of virtue and innocence." In his work on fiction, McGinn also develops what he insists is an "aesthetic theory of virtue," which he identifies as Platonic and "not much in favor with today's analytical moral philosophers." McGinn notes that analytic philosophers have had little to say about these sorts of topics; "perhaps the lack of rigorous methodology deters them."

Now, the work of Charles Taylor, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Martha Nussbaum in moral philosophy seems to disprove McGinn's comment about the incapacity of analytically trained philosophers to turn to genuine issues of moral philosophy. But, in fact, these exceptions suggest that he's right: Each of them has gained a wide audience and had something to say about philosophy and life by deploying resources—from literature, classical philosophy, even Continental philosophy—outside analytic philosophy. And premier analytic philosophers are deeply suspicious of the likes of Taylor, MacIntyre, and Nussbaum, questioning whether they deserve to be called philosophers.

The problem lies in the analytic conception of philosophy as, in McGinn's words, "more like science than religion, more like mathematics than poetry." Indeed, if there is any philosophical *eros* motivating McGinn and his fellow practitioners, it has to do with the longing to make issues "purely technical, a mere matter of writing your axioms the right way to get out the theorems you were looking for. It was the ever tempting hope of turning philosophy into science; misguided perhaps, but undeniably appealing ('sexy,' as some philosophers like to say)."

McGinn's memoir illustrates the failure of that sexy project. The specific problem that engenders in McGinn a sense of the limitations of philosophy is consciousness. Having spent a good deal of time scrutinizing various philosophical accounts of consciousness, McGinn is impressed with Thomas Nagel's famous argument, in his book *The View from Nowhere*, against the reduction of consciousness to brain states. Nagel probes the question "what is it like to be a bat?" and argues that, although we can analyze the nature and functioning of the bat brain, we cannot know what it is like to have the conscious experience that bats have.

HarperCollins

The Making of a Philosopher
My Journey Through Twentieth-Century Philosophy
by Colin McGinn
HarperCollins, 256 pp., $25.95

Now—and this is a nicely observed philosophical point—if we can know (by careful medical and scientific investigation) how a bat's brain functions, and yet at the same time not know what that bat's conscious experience is like, then the brain and consciousness cannot be identical.

This creates an apparently irresolvable problem for someone devoted to the scientizing of philosophy. (For advocating such skepticism about the equation of consciousness with the material brain, McGinn has been called a "mysterian" by some of his fellow analytics.) But, rather than use this problem to question his philosophical foundations, McGinn turns instead to the question of why so many philosophical problems seem essentially insoluble.

It is easy to see why a philosopher would prefer the clarity and rigor of analytic philosophy to, for instance, those strains of Continental philosophy that rush to transform philosophy into pure poetry (and often very bad poetry). But Continental philosophers have at least succeeded in keeping the questions of the link between thought and life at the forefront, often because they have been more attentive to the history of philosophy. As McGinn depicts analytic philosophy, it excludes nearly the entirety of previous philosophy. Wittgenstein, Russell, and a few other twentieth-century analysts constitute the remotest origins. *The Making of a Philosopher* does make an occasional reference to Plato, of whom it says that he equated philosophy with "The Profound," a description that barely achieves the penetration of an average freshman.

The book also shows some fascination with the ontological proof for the existence of God articulated by the eleventh-century theologian St. Anselm. Unfortunately, what attracts McGinn to Anselm's argument is not its subject matter but its structure; it is "just so damn clever." And cleverness is the key intellectual virtue of analytic philosophy. Competition in cleverness turns many a philosophical dispute into what McGinn calls "bloodsport."

McGinn only gives us occasional glimpses of philosophy as bloodsport. There's his fellow student and former friend at Oxford, Christopher Peacocke, whose philosophical work McGinn describes as "preposterously unclear" and from whom he parts after realizing that "professional rivalry was

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more important to him than friendship." In his dispassionate way, McGinn is careful to inform the reader that Peacocke ends up the clear loser in this rivalry. McGinn's reputation rises quickly after he wins the John Locke prize at Oxford, a prize Peacocke previously won. Years later, when the prestigious Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy at Oxford becomes vacant, Peacocke is the best bet to fill it. But McGinn applies for the position anyway—despite the fact that he had fought several battles with Oxford. When asked to interview, he does so not because he has any interest in the position but only as a protest against "Oxford's notorious insularity," to show that "there are strong outside candidates." Of course, he gets the offer and takes it.

The self-purported purity of McGinn's motives adversely affects his narrative. He seems either not to share or to be incapable of expressing the emotions, motivations, and passions that would draw readers into his story. What we miss is the complex, and often conflicting, set of loves and aspirations that constitutes the best biographical writing about poets, artists, and even philosophers.

Lacking a vision of philosophy as a personal quest, McGinn has written merely a conventional, academic memoir. Even with the low expectations of this genre, we need detailed stories of some sort, departmental politics, even entertaining gossip. But McGinn's characters are either all thought or all surface (although there's a great description of Michael Dummett's "pasty" white face, which looks as if he'd been "dunked in a barrel of flour and then licked his lips").

The odd consequence of all this is that McGinn can communicate no deeper feeling about, say, the death of close friends than he manages to express about, for instance, his failed attempt to engage the actress Jennifer Aniston in philosophical conversation. I am not sure McGinn intended the story of his chat with Aniston at a movie premiere to be funny, but it struck me that way. When she asks, "Who's your favorite philosopher?" McGinn offers a series of names—Russell, Kant, Plato, and Descartes—of which only Plato is known to Aniston. Sensing that the conversation is not going well, McGinn blurts out, "Well, you are wonderful in *Friends*!" McGinn observes ruefully that "the damage was done. . . . I just wish she had known who Descartes was, that's all. . . . It's not often that Hollywood meets analytical philosophy, and it would have been nice for it to have gone more swimmingly."

More swimmingly. Colin McGinn's *The Making of a Philosopher* has its merits. The assertions of the purity of his own motives, while attributing impure motives to others; the purported hesitancy about popularizing accompanied by references to appearances on CNN; the repeated swipes at Oxford—all of these are clever (there's that word again) mechanisms of academic one-upmanship. But what one misses is philosophy as a "lived subject," as a genuine "part of a flesh and blood human life." ♦

The Nazi Way of Death

How mass murder became possible.

BY JACK FISCHEL

As Richard Rhodes notes in *Masters of Death*, his riveting history of the Nazi death squads known as the Einsatzgruppen, gas chambers and crematoria have come to typify the Holocaust. The reality, however, is that poison gas was just one among several methods used by the Nazis to kill their Jewish victims. Early on in the extermination process, the main method of mass murder was firearms—and lethal privation. The Einsatzgruppen, numbering around three thousand men, were the primary instrument by which the Nazis murdered more than a half million Jews, from the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 through the winter of 1941-1942.

Masters of Death
The SS-Einsatzgruppen and the Invention of The Holocaust
by Richard Rhodes
Knopf, 335 pp., $27.50

In writing the history of the Einsatzgruppen, Rhodes (who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988 for *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*) wants to probe the underlying causes that transformed Germans into mass murderers. In his 1999 book *Why They Kill*, Rhodes examined the work of Lonnie Athens, a criminologist who explored case histories of convicted murderers, and he derived from Athens's research the notion of "violentization," a theory that explains why people commit violent crimes. *Masters of Death* is Rhodes's attempt to apply that idea to the Einsatzgruppen—challenging, along the way, the arguments of two seminal books on the motivation of the Nazi perpetrators: Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1992) and Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (1996).

According to Athens, the violent socialization process that culminates in murder undergoes four stages, which he identifies as brutalization, belligerency, violent performance, and virulency (or chronic violent behavior). The stages follow sequentially and each stage has to be fully experienced

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before the subject advances to the next one. Although the stage of brutalization is inflicted on the subject, the later three stages result from decisions the subject makes. Athens rejected both nature and nurture as the cause for homicidal violence, arguing instead that people who engage in brutality against others *choose* to do so and are therefore responsible for their actions.

Applying this to the Holocaust, Rhodes rejects the view of Browning, who argued that peer pressure was one of the main factors that drove Germans to engage in the atrocities. Citing case studies of 1,581 perpetrators involved in the Nazi genocide, Rhodes discovered that two-thirds were long-time Nazis and a third had been prewar extremists with violent backgrounds. Rhodes concludes that the reservists in Browning's study of Police Battalion 101 were less likely to be Nazis, less steeped in violence than other police battalions, and therefore the exception rather than the rule.

Similarly, Rhodes discounts Goldhagen's thesis that ascribed Nazi mass murder to "eliminationist anti-Semitism," the belief that Jewish influence was so prevalent and destructive in Germany that most Germans felt Jews must be eliminated irrevocably from society. Rhodes rejects Goldhagen's argument that in regard to Nazi anti-Semitism, "people must be motivated to kill others or else they would not do so." In fact, contends Rhodes, motivation is not sufficient by itself to produce serious violence. "People must also have undergone prior violent experience. They must have learned to be violent and must have come to identify themselves as violent." Without being conditioned to enact violence, he suggests, intense hatreds would simply take the form of discrimination, ostracism, and denunciation—the type of response characteristic of European anti-Semitism before Hitler.

Rhodes concludes that the evidence does not support the theory that ideology causes violent behavior, though it may well justify it. And Rhodes is correct that the Einsatzgruppen units accompanying the German army into

Both: CORBIS.

Above: A portrait of Heinrich Himmler. Below: The Einsatzgruppen major general Otto Ohlendorf at his trial in Nuremburg.

the Soviet Union were anything but ordinary Germans. With the German invasion of Russia in June 1941, the steps which culminated in the Holocaust began to take shape. The SS required large numbers of killers on the Eastern front to enact the "Final Solution." Heinrich Himmler vetted the dossiers of the candidates for the Einsatzgruppen, selecting recruits from reserve police battalions and the German police forces who had been involved in the killing of civilians in Poland. Thus a high percentage of those recruited for the Einsatzgruppen had been, in Athens's construct, violently socialized by the time they were recruited for duty in the Soviet Union.

As Rhodes describes the unbelievable brutality of the Einsatzgruppen as they callously executed Jewish men, women, and children, he also elicits for the reader the manner in which they were indoctrinated so as to relieve pangs of conscience that they might feel about the murders that they were about to commit. They were told, among other things, that all Jews were criminals, sub-humans, and the cause of Germany's defeat in World War I. As for the murder of children, Rhodes cites Himmler's address in 1943 justifying the killing of infants: "Then the question arose, what about women and children? . . . For I did not feel justified in exterminating the men—that is to kill them or have them killed—while allowing the avengers, in the form of their children, to grow up in the midst of our sons and grandsons."

In speech after speech to the Einsatzgruppen, Himmler conveyed the message that their concerns over the excessive murders were not only a normal reaction to wartime conditions, but proof of their humanity (the repugnance they felt about shooting unarmed civilians being a cause for congratulations, because it affirmed that they were civilized).

At the same time, Himmler admitted that this type of killing was difficult for his men, and he sought to refine the killing process in order to shield the Einsatzgruppen squads from their victims, the sight of whom on occasion produced psychological breakdowns among the perpetrators. The gas chambers and crematoria in Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, and Auschwitz were thus the barriers that shielded the perpetrators from their victims.

Rhodes's *Masters of Death* is not for the squeamish. The author is unrelenting in describing the brutal manner in which the Einsatzgruppen moved from town to town in the Soviet Union hunting down Jews. With the aid of auxiliaries they enlisted among the Ukrainians, Latvians, Estonians, and

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Lithuanians, they engaged in one massacre after another.

Rhodes makes the suggestion, at the end of *Masters of Death*, that World War I set the stage for the Holocaust: The piles of rotting corpses and the muddy, denuded landscape prefigured the killing pits and the death camps of the Third Reich. The war also produced tens of thousands of soldiers who were unable to comprehend why Germany surrendered and were vulnerable to the incendiary propaganda of the Nazis.

That the war had indoctrinated them into the virulence stage of the violent socialization process also made them prime candidates for recruitment into the Nazi movement—and, subsequently, the perpetrators of the Holocaust. ♦

Physics and Politics

The embarrassing but mostly harmless leftism of Albert Einstein. BY RONALD RADOSH

There is no doubt that J. Edgar Hoover was guilty of sustained abuses of power. The FBI chief's anti-communism had (as the historian Richard Gid Powers puts it) such a "hard edge" that even when he was on target he seemed "tendentious and repressive"—and, by now, most Americans remember him primarily as a threat to civil liberty.

The Einstein File
J. Edgar Hoover's Secret War Against the World's Most Famous Scientist
by Fred Jerome
St. Martin's, 358 pp., $27.95

Building upon this consensus, Fred Jerome has produced a book that promises to reveal the extent of Hoover's personal crusade to destroy Albert Einstein. But *The Einstein File: J. Edgar Hoover's Secret War Against the World's Most Famous Scientist* is not simply a chronicle of the FBI's sometimes silly and wasteful effort to track Einstein's every move and idea. The book is, rather, one last attempt to claim that the very existence of communism in the 1940s and 1950s was nothing but the excuse for a government campaign of repression against dissenters from the Cold War.

Ronald Radosh, adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute, is co-author with Mary Habeck of Spain Betrayed: The Soviet Union in the Spanish Civil War *and author of a memoir,* Commies: A Journey Through the Old Left, the New Left and the Leftover Left.

On the whole, that's not surprising. Jerome worked in the mid-1960s as one of the original founders of the Progressive Labor party, a Maoist splinter group that thought both the American Communist party and the Soviets in Moscow too soft. Thus, in *The Einstein File*, Hoover is invariably described as a man "keeping company with this country's native Nazis," with Nazi "officials in Berlin," and a man with "possible pro-Nazi linkages"—all of which is supposed to provide the reason for the FBI's targeting of Einstein in 1940.

Jerome may well be right that Hoover and the FBI at times accepted the analysis of the most extreme counter-subversives. But Jerome puts little stock in Jerrold and Leona Schechter's convincing demonstration that Einstein's mistress, Margarita Konenkova, was a longtime spotter for the KGB who reported on which of Einstein's friends the Russians might try to recruit for espionage. Her friendship with Einstein was of great importance to Soviet intelligence. Moscow knew, for example, that Einstein had close contact with many scientists involved in the Manhattan Project. Through Konenkova, the KGB got Einstein to agree to a meeting in the fall of 1945, where Einstein was pressed to become a spokesman for the sharing of nuclear secrets with Stalin.

Einstein himself—despite his signing the letter to President Roosevelt that prompted the United States to begin work on the atomic bomb—did not work on the bomb. The physicist Hans Bethe suggested this was because Einstein never worked in the practical areas of nuclear physics and explosives in which experts were needed. But Jerome insists the reason is far more sinister: Einstein was excluded because the FBI relied on Nazi intelligence that branded him a dangerous Jewish pacifist. Worse, Jerome suggests, Einstein would have turned against the project once the war against Germany was over. Thus, in order to ensure completion of the bomb to use against Japan, they had to keep Einstein out.

This all assumes, of course, the mad notion that people at the time knew exactly how long the bomb would take to make and when the war would end. Indeed, Jerome reasserts the old Cold War revisionism that the bomb was dropped in Japan solely to end the war before the Soviet Union intervened—which, in point of fact, matches Einstein's later blaming of Hiroshima on Truman's anti-Soviet policy.

From the FBI vendetta to destroy Einstein's credibility, Jerome moves in *The Einstein File* to suggest, in an odd way, that the FBI was right: Einstein was a profoundly perceptive dissenter, an opponent of the Cold War and American racism, a pacifist, and a left-wing socialist. Einstein was not merely a brilliant scientist, Jerome thinks, but also a brilliant political observer. And thus everyone from historians to textbook writers to the FBI has been forced to hide Einstein's views from the record, so that those who admire him will not realize that Einstein opposed American foreign policy and favored socialism.

Actually, Einstein's views hardly suffered repression at the time. For decades the left-wing socialist publication *Monthly Review* regularly republished the essay "Why Socialism?," which Einstein had written for its first

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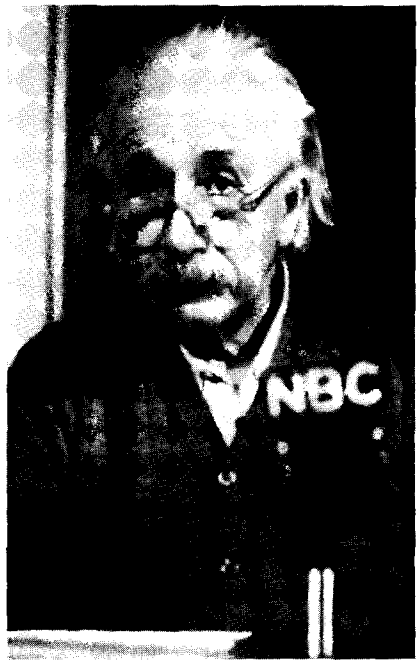
issue in 1949. Even Jerome is forced to admit that "almost all of Einstein's outspoken political stands were major news stories." There may actually have been something like a general agreement to make Einstein's "anti-establishment politics" a "non-story" since the scientist's death in 1955. But that isn't, as Jerome thinks, because we wanted to suppress his political insights. It's because we wanted to preserve his scientific reputation, and the naiveté of his political views is an embarrassment.

Jerome, however, wants Einstein to be a "role-model" for today's youth, who might emulate his politics if only they knew about them. Thus *The Einstein File* cannot stop itself from concluding that Einstein would "have been alarmed" after September 11 at Washington's "military attacks abroad and repression at home," and at the "unapologetic bombing of civilians; the roundup . . . with no evidence, of thousands of Arabs."

So—forced to take up the question again—what shall we say now of Einstein's politics? The scientist lent his prestige to innumerable causes: the campaign to stop lynchings, the Loyalist government and the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, the postwar Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists, the protest at the arrest of Communist party officials under the Smith Act in 1948—and on and on. He also joined his name to "The Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace" held in the spring of 1949 by a Communist front group called the Arts, Sciences, and Professions Council. Greetings to the conference—which Jerome mentions to show us how broad-based and innocent the meeting was—were sent by such prominent figures as Prime Minister Nehru of India, the Irish playwright Sean O'Casey, and the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. Americans included Lillian Hellman, Dorothy Parker, Langston Hughes, George Seldes, Aaron Copland, Norman Mailer, and Leonard Bernstein.

In other words, it was a prestigious and harmless group of proud and defiant left-wingers. Jerome writes disarmingly that the meeting "provided interesting and often intense debates between pro-Moscow delegates and many who believed there had to be a non-Soviet alternative to 'the American Century.'" Thus, he mocks *Life* magazine's coverage, which depicted a picket holding a sign, "Stop Stalin; Save Slovakia!" Jerome is most infuriated that *Life* called it a meeting made up of "dupes and fellow travelers."



Above: A rare violin performance by Einstein. Below: On Eleanor Roosevelt's TV program.

Unfortunately for Jerome, the truth about that meeting has long been known. In his 1990 memoir, *Being Red*, Howard Fast—in the postwar years *still a leading Communist*—reveals how he and other members of the "Cultural Section" of the American Communist party created the conference. "Over five hundred of the nation's leading intellectuals were willing to put their careers and names on the line for a conference created by the Communist Party," Fast notes. "The lines were clearly drawn, and no one at the conference had any illusions as to who the organizers were." Perhaps not, except at the time all those intellectuals lied and claimed that it was slander to say that the meeting was run by the Communist party.

To look back over Einstein's career is to see a parade of such embarrassments. He supported Henry Wallace's run for president in 1948 as candidate of the Progressive party (which Jerome admits the Communist party had a "crucial role" in setting up, but which, he insists, understood that "Red-baiting" was "far more destructive [than] having communists work" in the campaign). *The Einstein File* also contains a chapter outlining Einstein's relations with Paul Robeson and W.E.B. DuBois, the great African-American scholar who had drifted to the far left and become a strong supporter of Stalinism.

Jerome also presents Einstein's public attempts to gain clemency for Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. This is not necessarily proof of Communist affiliation. Many throughout the world, including the pope, made similar appeals. Others argued that the death sentence would only make them into martyrs and thereby help Communist propaganda. But in Jerome's telling, it becomes precisely the Communist aspects of the case that are significant. The Rosenbergs were a "watershed issue" for the left, Jerome writes, and in calling for clemency Einstein became "a political hero."

Jerome scathingly mocks an FBI memo that read, "Einstein has often been found among the ranks of deluded liberals who front for Communists." But it is a conclusion that now seems

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not so wide of the mark, however much *The Einstein File* takes umbrage at the "image of an otherworldly Einstein wandering through the world with his head in a far-off mathematical mist." This is the man who told a Russian War Relief rally that "in Russia the equality of all national and cultural groups is not merely nominal but is actually practiced." This is the man who told an interviewer that "the philosophy behind communism has a lot of merit," and that he "refused to let the American anti-Communist stampede deter him from supporting what he considered just causes." This is the man who wrote Norman Thomas, "I believe America is incomparably less endangered by its own Communists than by the historical hunt for the few Communists there are here."

All photos: St. Martin's Press

J. Edgar Hoover [illegible] the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947.

Readers should consult Edward S. Shapiro's *Letters of Sidney Hook*. Einstein had told Hook that the Soviets could never be a "menace to the United States," a judgment which Hook harshly answered. Einstein took great offense at Hook's letter, and Hook responded that Einstein might consider judging Soviet policy as he did that of Nazi Germany—by looking at the facts and not the words that came out of Stalin's mouth. Indeed, Hook was shocked when Einstein wrote that "it is difficult to decide whether it would have been possible for the Russians to survive by following softer methods," a judgment which Hook accurately took as apologia. How, Hook asked Einstein, could the purges and the terror have "helped the Russians to survive" or the "wholesale executions contributed in any way to the Russian victory over Hitler?"

In 1951 the French physicist and Communist Irène Joliot-Curie accused the American forces in Korea of using germ warfare. Hook asked Einstein to join other American Nobel laureates to sign a statement calling for objective examination of the charges. Einstein refused and instead condemned the petition as a "counter-action promoted by politicians." Hook was dumbfounded, especially since, as he wrote Einstein, the scientist had "knowingly lent your name and great scientific authority time and time again to many Communist front groups for exploitation here and abroad."

So where does all this bring us? For Jerome—an author who writes as if Alger Hiss were innocent and only "the first of many 'spies' who would soon be uncovered" in the Red Scare days—the picture that emerges is simply a cartoon. Scientists were "especially suspect" because McCarthyite yahoos saw them as "dangerous intellectuals, many of whom were also 'foreigners' and/or Jews."

It somehow does not occur to Jerome that—given the number of scientists who in fact were willing to spy for the Soviets—good reason existed to insist on high security measures when choosing personnel for work on American defense projects.

This, of course, does not excuse J. Edgar Hoover's belief that Einstein too might be a spy, which Jerome shows in scathing detail. There was no link between Einstein and Klaus Fuchs, and much of the FBI's data was based on secondhand and incorrect reports, including rumors of a nonexistent Einstein son who was held hostage by the Soviets in order to gain Einstein's cooperation.

Indeed, Jerome himself quotes a G-2 file which concluded that they found "considerable support by Einstein of CP fronts but no evidence to support active participation w/ Soviet agents active in Germany." That accurate assessment, so different from Hoover's willingness to entertain any crank's report, does in fact show the differences between Hoover's deficiencies and rational reporting by other intelligence agencies.

Jerome has a field day telling about the campaign to have Einstein denaturalized and deported, based on spurious charges, many of them emanating from the far-right Catholic newspaper *The Tablet*. Yet *The Einstein File* uses all of this to paint a picture of America on the verge of fascism, suffering under an "epidemic" of McCarthyism. And in this fanciful portrait of a cowered nation, Einstein is depicted as the leader of a new "call to resistance." Jerome even accuses Einstein's current defenders of sanitizing his left-wing record because they are still "frightened by Hoover's Red-baiting." It does not occur to him that in uncovering Einstein's record, they find his rather typical fellow-traveling activities hardly something of distinction.

The unfortunate truth is that Albert Einstein was as gullible on the Cold War as the average college leftist. American scientists' uncritical attitude on everything affecting the Soviet Union, Sidney Hook once wrote, could be attributed to "stubborn ignorance, sometimes compounded by a refusal to examine the evidence of the nature of Soviet Communism." More than fifty years later, there seems no reason to alter that judgment. ♦

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The Standard Reader

A Ford, Not a Shakespeare

You remember the headlines back at the end of 1995? "New Work by Shakespeare," "Literary Sleuth Uncovers Lost Poem by the Bard," "Did the Swan of Avon Write It?" It all started when a Vassar professor named Donald Foster claimed to have demonstrated that Shakespeare was the author of a minor Renaissance poem called "A Funerall Elegye."

Published in 1612—"in memory of the late vertuous Maister William Peeter"—the poem was signed with the initials "W.S." Those initials may have stood for William Stradling, the subject's cousin, or they may have stood for someone else, lost in the mists of history. They might even represent a blatant attempt to ride on the playwright's fame and make readers at the time believe Shakespeare had written the verse. But it seemed impossible that the mature William Shakespeare—only a few years before his death in 1616—could have written anything quite this bad.

But then along came Donald Foster to say that a combination of scholarly considerations—but particularly computer analysis of the language using the Renaissance database "Shaxicon"—proved that Shakespeare had indeed written "A Funerall Elegye." A front-page story in the *New York Times* followed. The textbook publishers Riverside, Norton, and Addison-Wesley, all added the poem to their new editions of Shakespeare. America sank to its knees in awe, while Britain huffed and puffed in outrage.

Well, it turns out at last that the Brits were right: Shakespeare isn't the author. In a June 12 posting to a Shakespeare e-mail discussion list, Foster declared that he'd changed his mind. A professor from the University of Burgundy named G.D. Monsarrat had been assigned the 578-line poem by the main French publisher of Shakespeare, and he became convinced, while working on his translation, that it reflected all the philosophical prejudices and stylistic tricks of the playwright John Ford, most famous as the author of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*.

Monsarrat published the result in the May issue of the *Review of English Studies*, and that—combined with news of the British writer Brian Vickers's forthcoming book *Counterfeiting Shakespeare*, which similarly concludes that Ford was the author—proved too much for Foster. "No one who cannot rejoice in the discovery of his own mistakes," he explained in his e-mail, "deserves to be called a scholar."

That's a good line, of a sort, and it's been quoted in all the news reports about Foster's recantation. In the *New York Observer* Ron Rosenbaum—who had been among the few Americans to reject the original attribution to Shakespeare—cheered: "It's a line that should win him more admirers than any so-called discovery, and it's a line more scholars should take to heart. It's a line about the way truth is often discovered through the dialectical process of making claims, recognizing error and often thereby discovering new truths."

But there's something better than rejoicing at one's errors—and much better than the pseudo-Hegelianism of using error to discover truth. That may be, in fact, the way the mind, or at least the scholarly mind, needs to work. But the Shakespeare error by which the Ford truth was discovered didn't happen in the privacy of Foster's mind. It happened in public, in the glare of the front page of the *New York Times*—and part of the reason it happened was precisely because there's front-page material in a new poem by Shakespeare. The alleged discovery of bad poetry by John Ford just doesn't rate the space, and Donald Foster was seduced.

You can see why. In the years since he got it wrong, Foster has gone from strength to strength. His first tentative work on the subject, *Elegy by W.S.: A Study in Attribution*, was published in 1989 by the small University of Delaware Press, while his recent memoir, *Author Unknown*, was issued by the mainstream publisher Henry Holt with dust-jacket publicity that called him "the world's first literary detective." He's been asked for literary analysis of notes in the Jon Benet Ramsey murder case, the Unabomber manifesto, and the post-September 11 anthrax letters. ("F.B.I. Agents Take Lessons in Detection From Shake-

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speare Super-Sleuth," read one newspaper headline.)

More successful were his stylistic conclusions that Joe Klein was the "Anonymous" behind the bestselling novel *Primary Colors*, and that Thomas Pynchon was *not* the author of the curious 1996 literary production entitled *The Letters of Wanda Tinasky* that some had ascribed to him.

Like the claim for Shakespeare's authorship of the elegy, all these deductions played out in the public eye. Foster deserves credit for admitting his mistake about "A Funerall Elegye," but if his fame, book advances, invitations to appear on television, and academic stardom are the result of being wrong, who wouldn't embrace the dialectical uses of error? First publish your most outrageous thought, reap the reward, and then settle down to decide what's actually the truth.

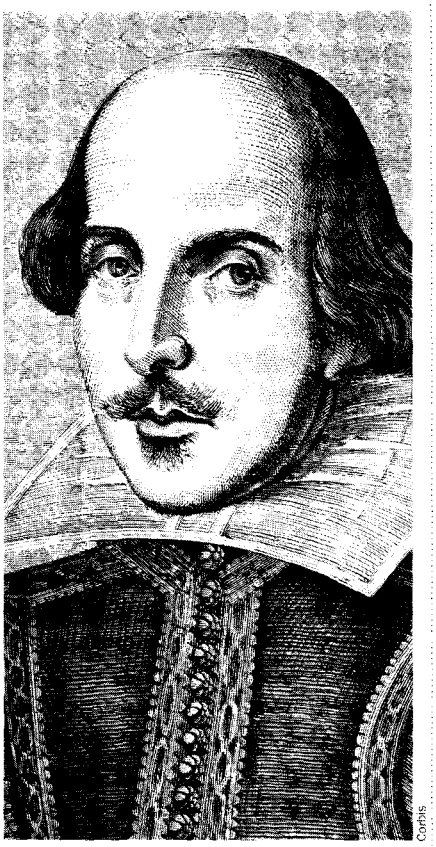
In his otherwise gracious e-mail admitting that he's changed his mind, Foster takes a swipe at the "Bardolators" whose worship of Shakespeare prevented them from even considering the possibility that he had written anything as inferior as "A Funerall Elegye." And Foster's right, of course, that some of Shakespeare's admirers can be a little hard to bear (although they are to be preferred to the academics for whom writing about the playwright is primarily an excuse to demonstrate their mastery of post-colonialism, queer studies, or deconstructive theory).

The truth is that Shakespeare was capable from time to time of an unclarity so palpable that one feels as though one were moving through a fog of words. Take this speech from *King Lear* (II.2, lines 116-124):

It pleased the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdued;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

But set that beside this, from "A Funerall Elegye" (lines 29-36):

The curious eye of a quick-brain'd survey
Could scantly find a mote amidst the sun
Of his too-short'ned days, or make a prey
Of any faulty errors he had done—
Not that he was above the spleenful sense
And spite of malice, but for that he had
Warrant enough in his own innocence
Against the sting of some in nature bad.


Corbis

Foster has a point about Bardolatry, if we find it too-much easier to attribute these words to Ford rather than Shakespeare, for Ford was a great dramatist who even at his worst is rarely this bad. But it's the way in which it's bad that's interesting. The passage from *King Lear* seems a muddy expression of a complex thought about human motivation—if anything, too complex a thought for Oswald to have when he explains to Cornwall about why Kent has set about him.

The passage from "A Funerall Elegye," on the other hand, is a muddied expression of something very simple: "The late vertuous Maister William Peeter" never got angry without just cause. And to express this minor thought, we have a *curious eye of a quick-brain'd survey* (and what's that when it's at home?), which is supposed simultaneously to be able to *find a mote* and *make a prey*. Errors aren't just errors, but *faulty errors*. The meter is uneasy in *Not that he was above*, and the sense has gone astray in *Against the sting of some in nature bad*.

Shakespeare has his share of faulty errors, but these just aren't his sort of errors. The early Shakespeare, in *Romeo and Juliet*, could write:

The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
Chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,
And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels

which sounds like poetry about how poets write, rather than poetry about its subject. The late Shakespeare could say, in *The Tempest*,

All hail, great master! grave sir, hail! I come
To answer thy best pleasure; be't to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curl'd clouds: to thy strong bidding task
Ariel and all his quality

where Ariel gives us the hackneyed fusing of *curl'd clouds*. But even in the these passages, Shakespeare is always saying something. Even when he's writing just for the joy of watching himself write, there's a core of thought.

That's why Shakespeare is Shakespeare, of course—and why it was worth all the news when Donald Foster ascribed to him the rather thoughtless "Funerall Elegye." But it's also why Foster should have known better in the first place.

—*J. Bottum*

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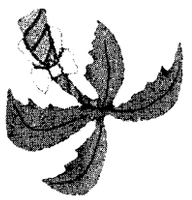
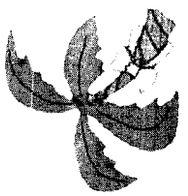
Authorities find a letter written by Osama bin Laden last December.
—News Item

Parody





December 2001

Dear Friends, Family, and Colleagues,

Wow! It's that time of year again. It seems like just a few months ago I was writing my last annual Holiday Season letter. As Allah says, time sure does fly.

What a long strange trip it's been! We've had some downer moments this year. Around September, I became the most reviled mass murderer on the face of the earth. On the other hand, in May we learned that Abdul was accepted into Stanford! We are pumped!

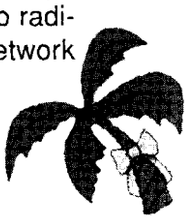
One of the things I'm really going to try to do next year is downscale my life. Not so much time traveling and organizing massacres of members of the Indian parliament, more time spent with the wives and kids. After all, nobody went to their grave saying, "I wish I'd spent more time blowing up Zionist entities." Well, actually they do say that, but never mind.

The kids are just great. Aside from getting into Stanford, Abdul graduated with honors from The Little Red Madrassa, which is a progressive Muslim school in which students are taught to make bombs that destroy people and shopping centers but not trees. He was named to the Kandahar All-Clan Lacrosse Team, which won regionals after the rival team was killed in factional fighting the week before the championship game. Go Spartans! And his science project, "Our Friend, Anthrax," won third place in the school Discovery Fair.

Meanwhile, darling Yastifa proved to be the raucous little fireball we always knew she was. She made the neighborhood Tap and Spirit Dance Squad—the Radio City Iraqettes—but we had to pull her out of school after we caught her learning to read. Then in August she blew herself up while trying to sneak into Israel from Lebanon. She didn't kill any Jews, but we were proud anyway.

As for Musa, she announced she wanted to transfer to Smith College, so we stoned her to death.

Work continues to provide challenges. As you may know, almost all of my colleagues have been killed by laser-guided munitions and I'm forced to hide in a cave with an imbecilic one-eyed mullah with body odor. With him it's always nag, nag, nag. Regrets, regrets, regrets: "I used to run this country," he says, "Now I'm eating camel fur soup in a wet rock pit with bats!" The whole experience reminds me how important it is to radiate positive energy. I've got great plans to upgrade our computer network



the weekly Standard
July 15, 2002

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The Case for Not Invading Iraq

David R. Henderson is a research fellow with the Hoover Institution and an economics professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

"Saddam Hussein is a madman, with weapons of mass destruction, and therefore we need to get rid of him." We have heard this from many Americans who want war with Iraq. But **there is little evidence that Hussein is mad, and his rational response to the dangerous incentives President Bush has set up should make us afraid.**

Consider the incentive that Bush Sr. set for Saddam Hussein. In 1991, just before the gulf war, the elder Bush made it clear that, if Hussein used chemical weapons against the U.S.-led coalition, Bush would consider "the strongest possible response"(his euphemism for nuclear weapons). It worked: Hussein refrained from using chemical weapons in the gulf war.

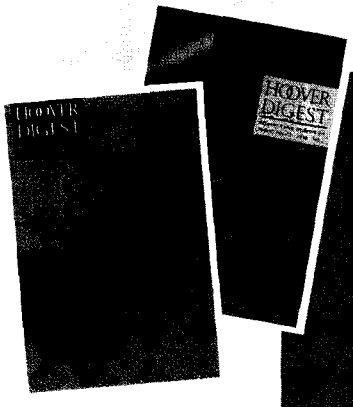
Consider the new incentives Hussein faces. Bush Jr. says he wants to get rid of Saddam Hussein. We're not talking about a move to Switzerland. Everyone understands that President Bush wants Saddam Hussein to die. One who understands that particularly well is Saddam Hussein. Hussein, therefore, also knows that Bush's staff is probably preparing, or will prepare, plans to kill him. What's Hussein's likely response? If he is as evil as George W. Bush thinks he is, then he wouldn't mind taking a million innocent Iraqis with him. In fact, he might actually prefer to die with a splash. Moreover, Hussein would probably prefer to take a few hundred thousand innocent Israelis or even Americans with him. If Hussein does have weapons of mass destruction, then he may be working to set up weapons around the world, possibly in American cities, to be detonated when he is near the end.

To avoid the deaths of many innocent Iraqis, and possibly of innocent Americans and Israelis, President Bush has two choices. The high-risk choice is to go after Saddam Hussein soon. Notice that I said "go after Saddam Hussein," not "go after Iraq." In a choice between being the only target and being one of a million Iraqi targets, Hussein would much prefer the latter. For one thing, it would help him go out with a big splash; for another, the U.S. killing of many innocent Iraqis would help him achieve a legacy—the unification of the Arab and Muslim worlds against the United States. There's a second choice. That would be for Bush to communicate, in a credible way, that he no longer wishes to replace Saddam Hussein. The first option is difficult because Hussein is well protected and might still have time to unleash his terror. The second option is also difficult because everyone knows Bush's true wishes for Hussein's future. One way to accomplish the second, however, is to actively push for ending the United Nation's sanctions on Iraq; this would communicate clearly that Hussein is no longer a target.

You might argue that Hussein is not a real threat. But if that's the case, then why all the serious discussion over invading Iraq? Either Hussein is a threat or he is not. Either way, invading Iraq is a bad idea.

— David R. Henderson

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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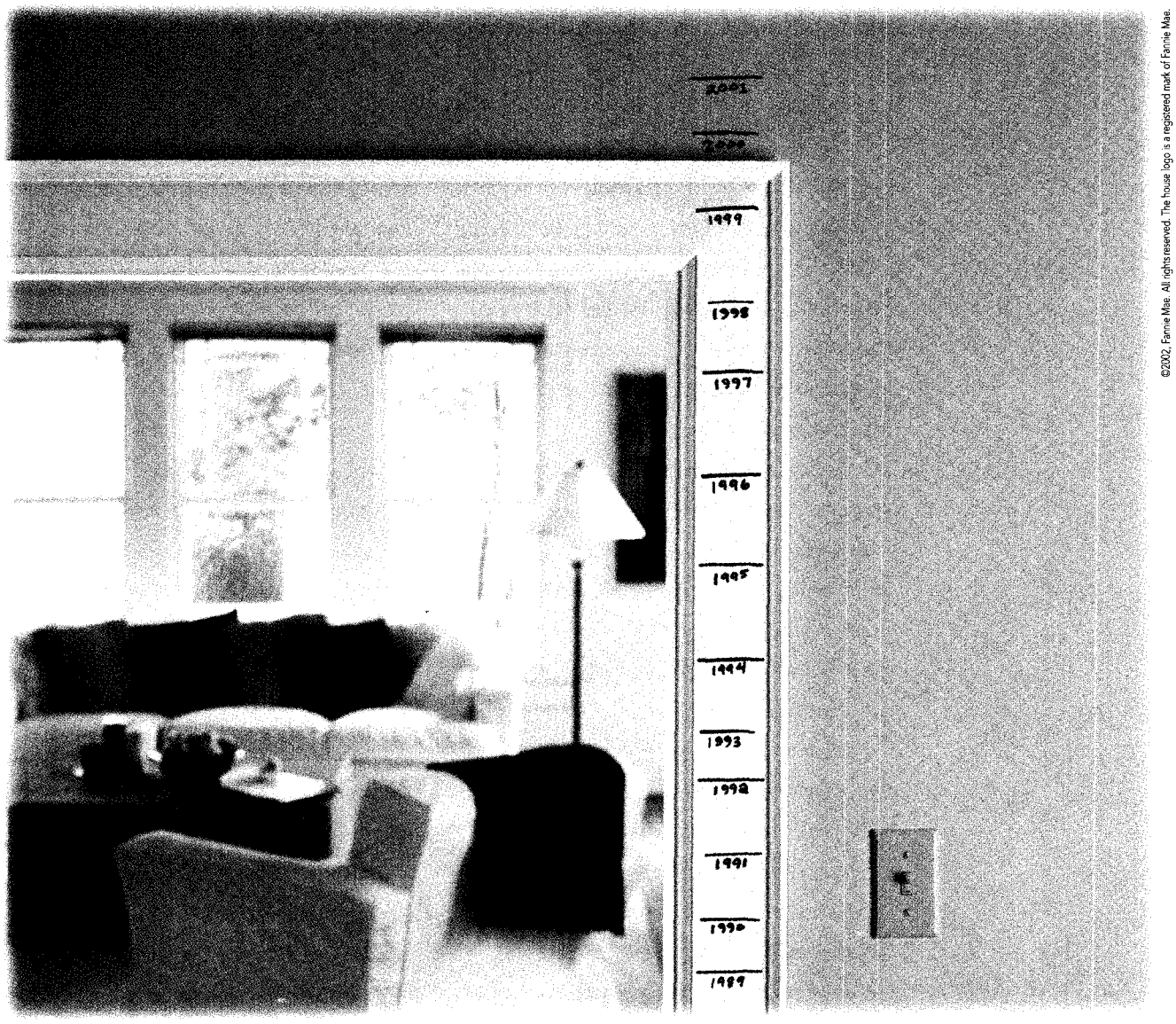

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